POEMS NEW AND OLD

HENRY NEWBOLT

POEMS: NEW AND OLD

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POEMS: NEW AND OLD

BY HENRY NEWBOLT

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TO

EDWARD

VISCOUNT GREY OF FALLODON, K.G.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THIS volume forms a complete collection of all my published work in verse from 1897 to 1918. It includes the contents of five previous volumes: *Admirals All* (1897), *The Island Race* (1898), *The Sailing of the Long-Ships* (1902), *Songs of Memory and Hope* (1909), and *St. George's Day* (1918), together with a number of pieces added to the later editions of the first two of these, ten poems first collected in *Poems: New and Old* (1912), and six which have not hitherto appeared in book form.

H. N.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
SONGS OF THE FLEET:	
I. SAILING AT DAWN	1
II. THE SONG OF THE SOU' WESTER	3
III. THE MIDDLE WATCH	5
IV. THE LITTLE ADMIRAL	7
V. THE SONG OF THE GUNS AT SEA	9
VI. FAREWELL	11
ODE FOR TRAFALGAR DAY, 1905	12
THE HUNDREDTH YEAR	14
DRAKE'S DRUM	16
THE FIGHTING TÉMÉRAIRE	18
ADMIRALS ALL	20
SAN STEFANO	23
HAWKE	26
THE BRIGHT MEDUSA	28
THE OLD SUPERB	30
THE QUARTER-GUNNER'S YARN	32
NORTHUMBERLAND	35
FOR A TRAFALGAR CENOTAPH	37
CRAVEN	38
MESSMATES	40
THE DEATH OF ADMIRAL BLAKE	42
VÆ VICTIS	45

PAGE

MINORA SIDERA 48
LAUDABUNT ALII 50
ADMIRAL DEATH 52
HOMEWARD BOUND 54
THE KING'S HIGHWAY 55
A CHANTY OF THE EMDEN 57
THE SERVICE 60
GILLESPIE 64
SERINGAPATAM 67
A BALLAD OF JOHN NICHOLSON 70
THE GUIDES AT CABUL, 1879 74
THE GAY GORDONS 76
THE TOY BAND 78
A LETTER FROM THE FRONT 80
HE FELL AMONG THIEVES 82
IONICUS 85
THE NON-COMBATANT 87
THE WAR FILMS 88
ST. GEORGE'S DAY 89
HIC JACET 91
SACRAMENTUM SUPREMUM 92
CLIFTON CHAPEL 93
VITAÏ LAMPADA 95
THE VIGIL 97
TO BELGIUM, 1914 99
THE SAILING OF THE LONG-SHIPS . . . 100
WAGGON HILL 102
THE VOLUNTEER 104
THE ONLY SON 105
THE GRENADIER'S GOOD-BYE 106
THE SCHOOLFELLOW 107

PAGE
ON SPION KOP 108
THE SCHOOL AT WAR 109
BY THE HEARTH-STONE 111
PEACE 112
APRIL ON WAGGON HILL 113
THE FOURTH OF AUGUST 115
A BALLAD OF SIR PERTAB SINGH . . . 123
COMMEMORATION 127
THE ECHO 129
THE BEST SCHOOL OF ALL 131
ENGLAND 133
VICTORIA REGINA 134
THE KING OF ENGLAND 135
THE NILE 137
SRÁHMANDÁZI 140
OUTWARD BOUND 143
HOPE THE HORNBLOWER 144
O PULCHRITUDO 146
THE FINAL MYSTERY 147
IL SANTO 149
IN JULY 151
FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION . . . 152
WHEN I REMEMBER 153
MORS JANUA 154
RONDEL 155
RONDEL 156
BALADE 157
THE LAST WORD 158
THE VIKING'S SONG 161
THE SUFI IN THE CITY 162
TO EDWARD FITZGERALD 164

PAGE

YATTENDON 166
DEVON 167
AMONG THE TOMBS 168
GOLD 169
A SOWER 170
THE MOSSROSE 171
AVE, SOROR 173
TO A RIVER IN THE SOUTH 174
ON THE DEATH OF A NOBLE LADY . . . 175
MIDWAY 176
AD MATREM DOLOROSAM 177
SNOW-WHITE 178
VRAIS AMANTS 180
THE SANGREAL 181
SIR HUGH THE PALMER 182
THE PRESENTATION 185
THE INHERITANCE 186
AMORE ALTIERO 188
THE PEDLAR'S SONG 190
BENEDICK'S SONG 191
LOVE AND GRIEF 192
EGERIA'S SILENCE 193
TRUE THOMAS 194
CLERK SAUNDERS 195
AGAINST OBLIVION 196
FOND COUNSEL 197
YOUTH 198
THE WANDERER 199
THE ADVENTURERS 200
TO CLARE 202
THE RETURN OF SUMMER: AN ECLOGUE . . 203

PAGE

DREAM-MARKET 207
SONG OF THE CHILDREN IN PALADORE . . 214
THE CICALAS: AN IDYLL 216
THE FAUN 222
FIDELE'S GRASSY TOMB 225
MOONSET 228
A SONG OF EXMOOR 230
MASTER AND MAN 232
GAVOTTE 234
IMOGEN 235
NEL MEZZO DEL CAMMÌN 237
THE INVASION 238
RILLOBY-RILL 240
PEREUNT ET IMPUTANTUR 242
FELIX ANTONIUS 244
IRELAND, IRELAND 245
HYMN 246
THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE 248
EPISTLE 252
AN ESSAY ON CRITICISM 256
LE BYRON DE NOS JOURS 261
NOTES 267

O strength divine of Roman days,
  O spirit of the age of faith,
Go with our sons on all their ways,
  When we long since are dust and wraith.

POEMS: NEW AND OLD

Songs of the Fleet

I

Sailing at Dawn

ONE by one the pale stars die before the day now,
One by one the great ships are stirring from their sleep,
Cables all are rumbling, anchors all a-weigh now,
Now the fleet's a fleet again, gliding towards the deep.

Now the fleet's a fleet again, bound upon the old ways,
Splendour of the past comes shining in the spray;
Admirals of old time, bring us on the bold ways!
Souls of all the sea-dogs, lead the line to-day!

Far away behind us town and tower are dwindling,
Home becomes a fair dream faded long ago;
Infinitely glorious the height of heaven is kindling,
Infinitely desolate the shoreless sea below.

Now the fleet's a fleet again, bound upon the old ways,
Splendour of the past comes shining in the spray;
Admirals of old time, bring us on the bold ways!
Souls of all the sea-dogs, lead the line to-day!

Once again with proud hearts we make the old surrender,
Once again with high hearts serve the age to be,
Not for us the warm life of Earth, secure and tender,
Ours the eternal wandering and warfare of the sea.

Now the fleet's a fleet again, bound upon the old ways,
Splendour of the past comes shining in the spray;
Admirals of old time, bring us on the bold ways!
Souls of all the sea-dogs, lead the line to-day!

II

The Song of the Sou' Wester

THE sun was lost in a leaden sky,
And the shore lay under our lee;
When a great Sou' Wester hurricane high
Came rollicking up the sea.
He played with the fleet as a boy with boats
Till out for the Downs we ran,
And he laugh'd with the roar of a thousand throats
At the militant ways of man:

Oh! I am the enemy most of might,
The other be who you please!
Gunner and guns may all be right,
Flags a-flying and armour tight,
But I am the fellow you've first to fight—
The giant that swings the seas.

A dozen of middies were down below
Chasing the X they love,
While the table curtseyed long and slow
And the lamps were giddy above.

The lesson was all of a ship and a shot,
And some of it may have been true,
But the word they heard and never forgot
Was the word of the wind that blew:

Oh! I am the enemy most of might,
The other be who you please!
Gunner and guns may all be right,
Flags a-flying and armour tight,
But I am the fellow you've first to fight—
The giant that swings the seas.

The Middy with luck is a Captain soon,
With luck he may hear one day
His own big guns a-humming the tune
"'Twas in Trafalgar's Bay."
But wherever he goes, with friends or foes,
And whatever may there befall,
He'll hear for ever a voice he knows
For ever defying them all:

Oh! I am the enemy most of might,
The other be who you please!
Gunner and guns may all be right,
Flags a-flying and armour tight,
But I am the fellow you've first to fight—
The giant that swings the seas.

III

The Middle Watch

IN a blue dusk the ship astern
Uplifts her slender spars,
With golden lights that seem to burn
Among the silver stars.
Like fleets along a cloudy shore
The constellations creep,
Like planets on the ocean floor
Our silent course we keep.

And over the endless plain,
Out of the night forlorn
Rises a faint refrain,
A song of the day to be born—
Watch, oh watch till ye find again
Life and the land of morn.

From a dim West to a dark East
Our lines unwavering head,
As if their motion long had ceased
And Time itself were dead.

Vainly we watch the deep below,
Vainly the void above,
They died a thousand years ago—
Life and the land we love.

But over the endless plain,
Out of the night forlorn
Rises a faint refrain,
A song of the day to be born—
Watch, oh watch till ye find again
Life and the land of morn.

IV

The Little Admiral

STAND by to reckon up your battleships—
Ten, twenty, thirty, there they go.
Brag about your cruisers like Leviathans—
A thousand men a-piece down below.
But here's just one little Admiral—
We're all of us his brothers and his sons,
And he's worth, O he's worth at the very least
Double all your tons and all your guns.

Stand by, etc.

See them on the forebridge signalling—
A score of men a-hauling hand to hand,
And the whole fleet flying like the wild geese
Moved by some mysterious command.
Where's the mighty will that shows the way to them,
The mind that sees ahead so quick and clear?
He's there, Sir, walking all alone there—
The little man whose voice you never hear.

Stand by, etc.

There are queer things that only come to sailormen;
They're true, but they're never understood;
And I know one thing about the Admiral,
That I can't tell rightly as I should.
I've been with him when hope sank under us—
He hardly seemed a mortal like the rest,
I could swear that he had stars upon his uniform,
And one sleeve pinned across his breast.

Stand by, etc.

Some day we're bound to sight the enemy,
He's coming, tho' he hasn't yet a name.
Keel to keel and gun to gun he'll challenge us
To meet him at the Great Armada game.
None knows what may be the end of it,
But we'll all give our bodies and our souls
To see the little Admiral a-playing him
A rubber of the old Long Bowls!

Stand by, etc.

V

The Song of the Guns at Sea

OH hear! Oh hear!
Across the sullen tide,
Across the echoing dome horizon-wide
What pulse of fear
Beats with tremendous boom?
What call of instant doom,
With thunderstroke of terror and of pride,
With urgency that may not be denied,
Reverberates upon the heart's own drum—
Come! . . . Come! . . . for thou must come!

Come forth, O Soul!
This is thy day of power.
This is the day and this the glorious hour
That was the goal
Of thy self-conquering strife.
The love of child and wife,
The fields of Earth and the wide ways of Thought—
Did not thy purpose count them all as nought
That in this moment thou thyself mayst give
And in thy country's life for ever live?

Therefore rejoice
That in thy passionate prime
Youth's nobler hope disdained the spoils of Time
And thine own choice
Fore-earned for thee this day.
Rejoice! rejoice to obey
In the great hour of life that men call Death
The beat that bids thee draw heroic breath,
Deep-throbbing till thy mortal heart be dumb—
Come! . . . Come! . . . the time is come!

VI

Farewell

MOTHER, with unbowed head
Hear thou across the sea
The farewell of the dead,
The dead who died for thee.
Greet them again with tender words and grave,
For, saving thee, themselves they could not save.

To keep the house unharmed
Their fathers built so fair,
Deeming endurance armed
Better than brute despair,
They found the secret of the word that saith,
" Service is sweet, for all true life is death."

So greet thou well thy dead
Across the homeless sea,
And be thou comforted
Because they died for thee.
Far off they served, but now their deed is done
For evermore their life and thine are one.

Ode for Trafalgar Day, 1905

"Partial firing continued until 4.30, when a victory having been reported to the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Nelson, K.B., and Commander-in-Chief, he then died of his wound."—Log of the *Victory*, October 21, 1805.

ENGLAND! to-day let fire be in thine eyes
And in thy heart the throb of leaping guns;
Crown in thy streets the deed that never dies,
And tell their fathers' fame to all thy sons!
Behold! behold! on that unchanging sea
Where day behind Trafalgar rises pale,
How dread the storm to be
Drifts up with ominous breath
Cloud after towering cloud of billowy sail
Full charged with thunder and the bolts of death.

Yet when the noon is past, and thy delight,
More delicate for these good hundred years,
Has drunk the splendour and the sound of fight
And the sweet sting of long-since vanished fears,
Then, England, come thou down with sterner lips
From the bright world of thy substantial power,
Forget thy seas, thy ships,
And that wide echoing dome
To watch the soul of man in his dark hour
Redeeming yet his dear lost land of home.

What place is this? What under-world of pain
All shadow-barred with glare of swinging fires?
What writhing phantoms of the newly slain?
What cries? What thirst consuming all desires?
This is the field of battle: not for life,
Not for the deeper life that dwells in love,
Not for the savour of strife
Or the far call of fame,
Not for all these the fight: all these above
The soul of this man cherished Duty's name.

His steadfast hope from self has turned away,
For the Cause only must he still contend:
"How goes the day with us? How goes the day?"
He craves not victory, but to make an end.
Therefore not yet thine hour, O Death: but when
The weapons forged against his country's peace
Lie broken round him—then
Give him the kiss supreme;
Then let the tumult of his warfare cease
And the last dawn dispel his anguished dream.

The Hundredth Year

"Drake, and Blake, and Nelson's mighty name."

THE stars were faint in heaven
That saw the Old Year die;
The dream-white mist of Devon
Shut in the seaward sky:
Before the dawn's unveiling
I heard three voices hailing,
I saw three ships come sailing
With lanterns gleaming high.

The first he cried defiance—
A full-mouthed voice and bold—
"On God be our reliance,
Our hope the Spaniard's gold!
With a still, stern ambuscado,
With a roaring escalado,
We'll sack their Eldorado
And storm their dungeon hold!"

Then slowly spake the second—
A great sad voice and deep—
"When all your gold is reckoned,
There is but this to keep:

To stay the foe from fooling,
To learn the heathen schooling,
To live and die sea-ruling,
And home at last to sleep."

But the third matched in beauty
The dawn that flushed afar;
"O sons of England, Duty
Is England's morning star:
Then Fame's eternal splendour
Be theirs who well defend her,
And theirs who fain would bend her
The night of Trafalgar!"

Drake's Drum

DRAKE he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below ?),
Slung atween the round shot in Nombre Dios Bay,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Yarnder lumes the Island, yarnder lie the ships,
Wi' sailor lads a-dancin' heel-an'-toe,
An' the shore-lights flashin', an' the night-tide dashin',
He sees et arl so plainly as he saw et long ago.

Drake he was a Devon man, an' rüled the Devon seas,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below ?),
Rovin' tho' his death fell, he went wi' heart at ease,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
"Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
Strike et when your powder's runnin' low ;
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed them long ago."

Drake he's in his hammock till the great Armadas come,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below ?),
Slung atween the round shot, listenin' for the drum,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.

Call him on the deep sea, call him up the Sound,
  Call him when ye sail to meet the foe;
Where the old trade's plyin' an' the old flag flyin'
  They shall find him ware an' wakin', as they found
    him long ago!

The Fighting Téméraire

IT was eight bells ringing,
For the morning watch was done,
And the gunner's lads were singing
As they polished every gun.
It was eight bells ringing,
And the gunner's lads were singing,
For the ship she rode a-swinging
As they polished every gun.

Oh! to see the linstock lighting,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
Oh! to hear the round shot biting,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
Oh! to see the linstock lighting,
And to hear the round shot biting,
For we're all in love with fighting
On the Fighting Téméraire.

It was noontide ringing,
And the battle just begun,
When the ship her way was winging
As they loaded every gun.

It was noontide ringing,
When the ship her way was winging,
And the gunner's lads were singing
As they loaded every gun.

There'll be many grim and gory,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
There'll be few to tell the story,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
There'll be many grim and gory,
There'll be few to tell the story,
But we'll all be one in glory
With the fighting Téméraire.

There's a far bell ringing
At the setting of the sun,
And a phantom voice is singing
Of the great days done.
There's a far bell ringing,
And a phantom voice is singing
Of renown for ever clinging
To the great days done.

Now the sunset breezes shiver,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
And she's fading down the river,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
Now the sunset breezes shiver,
And she's fading down the river,
But in England's song for ever
She's the Fighting Téméraire.

Admirals All

EFFINGHAM, Grenville, Raleigh, Drake,
  Here's to the bold and free!
Benbow, Collingwood, Byron, Blake,
  Hail to the Kings of the Sea!
Admirals all, for England's sake,
  Honour be yours and fame!
And honour, as long as waves shall break,
  To Nelson's peerless name!

Admirals all, for England's sake,
  Honour be yours and fame!
And honour, as long as waves shall break,
  To Nelson's peerless name!

Essex was fretting in Cadiz Bay
  With the galleons fair in sight;
Howard at last must give him his way,
  And the word was passed to fight.
Never was schoolboy gayer than he,
  Since holidays first began:
He tossed his bonnet to wind and sea,
  And under the guns he ran.

Drake nor devil nor Spaniard feared,
Their cities he put to the sack;
He singed his Catholic Majesty's beard,
And harried his ships to wrack.
He was playing at Plymouth a rubber of bowls
When the great Armada came;
But he said, "They must wait their turn, good souls,"
And he stooped, and finished the game.

Fifteen sail were the Dutchmen bold,
Duncan he had but two:
But he anchored them fast where the Texel shoaled
And his colours aloft he flew.
"I've taken the depth to a fathom," he cried,
"And I'll sink with a right good will,
For I know when we're all of us under the tide,
My flag will be fluttering still."

Splinters were flying above, below,
When Nelson sailed the Sound:
"Mark you, I wouldn't be elsewhere now,"
Said he, "for a thousand pound!"
The Admiral's signal bade him fly,
But he wickedly wagged his head,
He clapped the glass to his sightless eye
And "I'm damned if I see it," he said.

Admirals all, they said their say
(The echoes are ringing still),
Admirals all, they went their way
To the haven under the hill,

But they left us a kingdom none can take,
The realm of the circling sea,
To be ruled by the rightful sons of Blake
And the Rodneys yet to be.

Admirals all, for England's sake,
Honour be yours and fame!
And honour, as long as waves shall break,
To Nelson's peerless name!

San Stefano

(A Ballad of the Bold Menelaus)

IT was morning at St. Helen's, in the great and gallant days,
And the sea beneath the sun glittered wide,
When the frigate set her courses, all a-shimmer in the haze,
And she hauled her cable home and took the tide.
She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,
Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;
And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,
When the bold *Menelaus* put to sea.

She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,
Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;
And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,
When the bold Menelaus *put to sea.*

She was clear of Monte Cristo, she was heading for the land,
When she spied a pennant red and white and blue;
They were foemen, and they knew it, and they'd half a league in hand,
But she flung aloft her royals and she flew.

She was nearer, nearer, nearer, they were caught beyond
a doubt,
But they slipped her, into Orbetello Bay,
And the lubbers gave a shout as they paid their cables
out,
With the guns grinning round them where they lay.

Now Sir Peter was a captain of a famous fighting race,
Son and grandson of an admiral was he;
And he looked upon the batteries, he looked upon the
chase,
And he heard the shout that echoed out to sea.
And he called across the decks, "Ay! the cheering might
be late
If they kept it till the *Menelaus* runs;
Bid the master and his mate heave the lead and lay her
straight
For the prize lying yonder by the guns."

When the summer moon was setting, into Orbetello
Bay
Came the *Menelaus* gliding like a ghost;
And her boats were manned in silence, and in silence
pulled away,
And in silence every gunner took his post.
With a volley from her broadside the citadel she woke,
And they hammered back like heroes all the night;
But before the morning broke she had vanished through
the smoke
With her prize upon her quarter grappled tight.

It was evening at St. Helen's, in the great and gallant
time,
And the sky behind the down was flushing far;
And the flags were all a-flutter, and the bells were all
a-chime,
When the frigate cast her anchor off the bar.
She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and
more,
Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;
And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at
the fore,
When the bold *Menelaus* came from sea.

She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,
Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;
And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,
When the bold Menelaus *came from sea.*

Hawke

IN seventeen hundred and fifty nine,
When Hawke came swooping from the West,
The French King's Admiral with twenty of the line,
Was sailing forth, to sack us, out of Brest.
The ports of France were crowded, the quays of France
a-hum
With thirty thousand soldiers marching to the drum,
For bragging time was over and fighting time was come
When Hawke came swooping from the West.

'Twas long past noon of a wild November day
When Hawke came swooping from the West;
He heard the breakers thundering in Quiberon Bay,
But he flew the flag for battle, line abreast.
Down upon the quicksands roaring out of sight
Fiercely beat the storm-wind, darkly fell the night,
But they took the foe for pilot and the cannon's glare for
light
When Hawke came swooping from the West.

The Frenchmen turned like a covey down the wind
When Hawke came swooping from the West;
One he sank with all hands, one he caught and pinned,
And the shallows and the storm took the rest.

The guns that should have conquered us they rusted on
the shore,
The men that would have mastered us they drummed
and marched no more,
For England was England, and a mighty brood she bore
When Hawke came swooping from the West.

The Bright Medusa

(1807)

SHE'S the daughter of the breeze,
She's the darling of the seas,
And we call her, if you please, the bright *Medu—sa;*
From beneath her bosom bare
To the snakes among her hair
She's a flash o' golden light, the bright *Medu—sa.*

When the ensign dips above
And the guns are all for love,
She's as gentle as a dove, the bright *Medu—sa;*
But when the shot's in rack
And her forestay flies the Jack,
He's a merry man would slight the bright *Medu—sa.*

When she got the word to go
Up to Monte Video,
There she found the river low, the bright *Medu—sa;*
So she tumbled out her guns
And a hundred of her sons,
And she taught the Dons to fight the bright *Medu—sa.*

When the foeman can be found
With the pluck to cross her ground,
  First she walks him round and round, the bright
    Medu—sa ;
Then she rakes him fore and aft
Till he's just a jolly raft,
  And she grabs him like a kite, the bright *Medu—sa.*

She's the daughter of the breeze,
She's the darling of the seas,
  And you'll call her, if you please, the bright *Medu—sa* ;
For till England's sun be set—
And it's not for setting yet—
  She shall bear her name by right, the bright *Medu—sa.*

The Old Superb

THE wind was rising easterly, the morning sky was blue,
The Straits before us opened wide and free;
We looked towards the Admiral, where high the Peter flew,
And all our hearts were dancing like the sea.
"The French are gone to Martinique with four-and-twenty sail!
The Old *Superb* is old and foul and slow,
But the French are gone to Martinique, and Nelson's on the trail,
And where he goes ths Old *Superb* must go!"

So Westward ho! for Trinidad and Eastward ho! for Spain,
And "Ship ahoy!" a hundred times a day;
Round the world if need be, and round the world again,
With a lame duck lagging all the way!

The Old *Superb* was barnacled and green as grass below,
Her sticks were only fit for stirring grog;
The pride of all her midshipmen was silent long ago,
And long ago they ceased to heave the log.

Four year out from home she was, and ne'er a week in port,
And nothing save the guns aboard her bright;
But Captain Keats he knew the game, and swore to share the sport,
For he never yet came in too late to fight.

So Westward ho! for Trinidad and Eastward ho! for Spain,
And "Ship ahoy!" a hundred times a day;
Round the world if need be, and round the world again,
With a lame duck lagging all the way!

"Now up, my lads!" the Captain cried, "for sure the case were hard
If longest out were first to fall behind.
Aloft, aloft with studding sails, and lash them on the yard,
For night and day the Trades are driving blind!"
So all day long and all day long behind the fleet we crept,
And how we fretted none but Nelson guessed;
But every night the Old *Superb* she sailed when others slept,
Till we ran the French to earth with all the rest!

Oh, 'twas Westward ho! for Trinidad and Eastward ho! for Spain,
And "Ship ahoy!" a hundred times a day;
Round the world if need be, and round the world again,
With a lame duck lagging all the way!

The Quarter-Gunner's Yarn

WE lay at St. Helen's, and easy she rode
With one anchor catted and fresh-water stowed;
When the barge came alongside like bullocks we roared,
For we knew what we carried with Nelson aboard.

Our Captain was Hardy, the pride of us all,
I'll ask for none better when danger shall call;
He was hardy by nature and Hardy by name,
And soon by his conduct to honour he came.

The third day the Lizard was under our lee,
Where the *Ajax* and *Thunderer* joined us at sea,
But what with foul weather and tacking about,
When we sighted the Fleet we were thirteen days out.

The Captains they all came aboard quick enough,
But the news that they brought was as heavy as duff;
So backward an enemy never was seen,
They were harder to come at than Cheeks the Marine.

The lubbers had hare's lugs where seamen have ears,
So we stowed all saluting and smothered our cheers,
And to humour their stomachs and tempt them to dine,
In the offing we showed them but six of the line.

One morning the topmen reported below
The old *Agamemnon* escaped from the foe.
Says Nelson: "My lads, there'll be honour for some,
For we're sure of a battle now Berry has come."

"Up hammocks!" at last cried the bo'sun at dawn;
The guns were cast loose and the tompions drawn;
The gunner was bustling the shot racks to fill,
And "All hands to quarters!" was piped with a will.

We now saw the enemy bearing ahead,
And to East of them Cape Traflagar it was said,
'Tis a name we remember from father to son,
That the days of old England may never be done.

The *Victory* led, to her flag it was due,
Tho' the *Téméraires* thought themselves Admirals too;
But Lord Nelson he hailed them with masterful grace:
"Cap'n Harvey, I'll thank you to keep in your place."

To begin with we closed the *Bucentaure* alone,
An eighty-gun ship and their Admiral's own;
We raked her but once, and the rest of the day
Like a hospital hulk on the water she lay.

To our battering next the *Redoutable* struck,
But her sharpshooters gave us the worst of the luck:
Lord Nelson was wounded, most cruel to tell.
"They've done for me, Hardy!" he cried as he fell.

To the cockpit in silence they carried him past,
And sad were the looks that were after him cast;
His face with a kerchief he tried to conceal,
But we knew him too well from the truck to the keel.

When the Captain reported a victory won,
"Thank God!" he kept saying, "my duty I've done."
At last came the moment to kiss him good-bye,
And the Captain for once had the salt in his eye.

"Now anchor, dear Hardy," the Admiral cried;
But before we could make it he fainted and died.
All night in the trough of the sea we were tossed,
And for want of ground-tackle good prizes were lost.

Then we hauled down the flag, at the fore it was red,
And blue at the mizzen was hoisted instead
By Nelson's famed Captain, the pride of each tar,
Who fought in the *Victory* off Cape Traflagar.

Northumberland

"The Old and Bold."

WHEN England sets her banner forth
And bids her armour shine,
She'll not forget the famous North,
The lads of moor and Tyne;
And when the loving-cup's in hand,
And Honour leads the cry,
They know not old Northumberland
Who'll pass her memory by.

When Nelson sailed for Trafalgar
With all his country's best,
He held them dear as brothers are,
But one beyond the rest.
For when the fleet with heroes manned
To clear the decks began,
The boast of old Northumberland
He sent to lead the van.

Himself by *Victory's* bulwarks stood
And cheered to see the sight;
"That noble fellow Collingwood,
How bold he goes to fight!"

Love, that the league of Ocean spanned,
Heard him as face to face;
"What would he give, Northumberland,
To share our pride of place?"

The flag that goes the world around
And flaps on every breeze
Has never gladdened fairer ground
Or kinder hearts than these.
So when the loving-cup's in hand
And Honour leads the cry,
They know not old Northumberland
Who'll pass her memory by.

For a Trafalgar Cenotaph

LOVER of England, stand awhile and gaze
With thankful heart, and lips refrained from praise;
They rest beyond the speech of human pride
Who served with Nelson and with Nelson died.

Craven

(Mobile Bay, 1864)

OVER the turret, shut in his iron-clad tower,
Craven was conning his ship through smoke and flame;
Gun to gun he had battered the fort for an hour,
Now was the time for a charge to end the game.

There lay the narrowing channel, smooth and grim,
A hundred deaths beneath it, and never a sign;
There lay the enemy's ships, and sink or swim
The flag was flying, and he was head of the line.

The fleet behind was jamming; the monitor hung
Beating the stream; the roar for a moment hushed.
Craven spoke to the pilot; slow she swung;
Again he spoke, and right for the foe she rushed.

Into the narrowing channel, between the shore
And the sunk torpedoes lying in treacherous rank;
She turned but a yard too short; a muffled roar,
A mountainous wave, and she rolled, righted, and sank.

Over the manhole, up in the iron-clad tower,
Pilot and Captain met as they turned to fly:
The hundredth part of a moment seemed an hour,
For one could pass to be saved, and one must die.

They stood like men in a dream: Craven spoke,
Spoke as he lived and fought, with a Captain's pride,
"After you, Pilot:" the pilot woke,
Down the ladder he went, and Craven died.

All men praise the deed and the manner, but we—
We set it apart from the pride that stoops to the proud,
The strength that is supple to serve the strong and free,
The grace of the empty hands and promises loud:

Sidney thirsting a humbler need to slake,
Nelson waiting his turn for the surgeon's hand,
Lucas crushed with chains for a comrade's sake,
Outram coveting right before command,

These were paladins, these were Craven's peers,
These with him shall be crowned in story and song,
Crowned with the glitter of steel and the glimmer of tears,
Princes of courtesy, merciful, proud and strong.

Messmates

HE gave us all a good-bye cheerily
At the first dawn of day;
We dropped him down the side full drearily
When the light died away.
It's a dead dark watch that he's a-keeping there,
And a long, long night that lags a-creeping there,
Where the Trades and the tides roll over him
And the great ships go by.

He's there alone with green seas rocking him
For a thousand miles round;
He's there alone with dumb things mocking him,
And we're homeward bound.
It's a long, lone watch that he's a-keeping there,
And a dead cold night that lags a-creeping there,
While the months and the years roll over him
And the great ships go by.

I wonder if the tramps come near enough
As they thrash to and fro,
And the battle-ships' bells ring clear enough
To be heard down below;

If through all the lone watch that he's a-keeping there,
And the long, cold night that lags a-creeping there,
The voices of the sailor-men shall comfort him
When the great ships go by.

The Death of Admiral Blake

(August 7th, 1657)

LADEN with spoil of the South, fulfilled with the glory of achievement,
And freshly crowned with never-dying fame,
Sweeping by shores where the names are the names of the victories of England,
Across the Bay the squadron homeward came.

Proudly they came, but their pride was the pomp of a funeral at midnight,
When dreader yet the lonely morrow looms;
Few are the words that are spoken, and faces are gaunt beneath the torchlight
That does but darken more the nodding plumes.

Low on the field of his fame, past hope lay the Admiral triumphant,
And fain to rest him after all his pain;
Yet for the love that he bore to his own land, ever unforgotten,
He prayed to see the western hills again.

Fainter than stars in a sky long gray with the coming of the daybreak,
Or sounds of night that fade when night is done,
So in the death-dawn faded the splendour and loud renown of warfare,
And life of all its longings kept but one.

"Oh! to be there for an hour when the shade draws in beside the hedgerows,
And falling apples wake the drowsy noon:
Oh! for the hour when the elms grow sombre and human in the twilight,
And gardens dream beneath the rising moon.

"Only to look once more on the land of the memories of childhood,
Forgetting weary winds and barren foam:
Only to bid farewell to the combe and the orchard and the moorland,
And sleep at last among the fields of home!"

So he was silently praying, till now, when his strength was ebbing faster,
The Lizard lay before them faintly blue;
Now on the gleaming horizon the white cliffs laughed along the coast-line,
And now the forelands took the shapes they knew.

There lay the Sound and the Island with green leaves
down beside the water,
The town, the Hoe, the masts with sunset fired—
Dreams! ay, dreams of the dead! for the great heart
faltered on the threshold,
And darkness took the land his soul desired.

Væ Victis

BESIDE the placid sea that mirrored her
With the old glory of dawn that cannot die,
The sleeping city began to moan and stir,
As one that fain from an ill dream would fly;
Yet more she feared the daylight bringing nigh
Such dreams as know not sunrise, soon or late,—
Visions of honour lost and power gone by,
Of loyal valour betrayed by factious hate,
And craven sloth that shrank from the labour of forging fate.

They knew and knew not, this bewildered crowd
That up her streets in silence hurrying passed,
What manner of death should make their anguish loud,
What corpse across the funeral pyre be cast,
For none had spoken it; only, gathering fast
As darkness gathers at noon in the sun's eclipse,
A shadow of doom enfolded them, vague and vast,
And a cry was heard, unfathered of earthly lips,
"What of the ships, O Carthage! Carthage, what of the ships?"

They reached the wall, and nowise strange it seeme
To find the gates unguarded and open wide;
They climbed the shoulder, and meet enough they deemed
The black that shrouded the seaward rampart's side
And veiled in drooping gloom the turrets' pride;
But this was nought, for suddenly down the slope
They saw the harbour, and sense within them died;
Keel nor mast was there, rudder nor rope;
It lay like a sea-hawk's eyry spoiled of life and hope.

Beyond, where dawn was a glittering carpet, rolled
From sky to shore on level and endless seas,
Hardly their eyes discerned in a dazzle of gold
That here in fifties, yonder in twos and threes,
The ships they sought, like a swarm of drowning bees
By a wanton gust on the pool of a mill-dam hurled,
Floated forsaken of life-giving tide and breeze,
Their oars broken, their sails for ever furled,
For ever deserted the bulwarks that guarded the wealth of the world.

A moment yet, with breathing quickly drawn
And hands agrip, the Carthaginian folk
Stared in the bright untroubled face of dawn,
And strove with vehement heaped denial to choke
Their sure surmise of fate's impending stroke;

Vainly—for even now beneath their gaze
A thousand delicate spires of distant smoke
Reddened the disc of the sun with a stealthy haze,
And the smouldering grief of a nation burst with the kindling blaze.

"O dying Carthage!" so their passion raved,
"Would nought but these the conqueror's hate assuage?
If these be taken, how may the land be saved
Whose meat and drink was empire, age by age?"
And bitter memory cursed with idle rage
The greed that coveted gold above renown,
The feeble hearts that feared their heritage,
The hands that cast the sea-kings' sceptre down
And left to alien brows their famed ancestral crown.

The endless noon, the endless evening through,
All other needs forgetting, great or small,
They drank despair with thirst whose torment grew
As the hours died beneath that stifling pall.
At last they saw the fires to blackness fall
One after one, and slowly turned them home,
A little longer yet their own to call
A city enslaved, and wear the bonds of Rome,
With weary hearts foreboding all the woe to come.

Minora Sidera

(The Dictionary of National Biography)

SITTING at times over a hearth that burns
With dull domestic glow,
My thought, leaving the book, gratefully turns
To you who planned it so.

Not of the great only you deigned to tell—
The stars by which we steer—
But lights out of the night that flashed, and fell
To-night again, are here.

Such as were those, dogs of an elder day,
Who sacked the golden ports,
And those later who dared grapple their prey
Beneath the harbour forts:

Some with flag at the fore, sweeping the world
To find an equal fight,
And some who joined war to their trade, and hurled
Ships of the line in flight.

Whether their fame centuries long should ring
They cared not over-much,
But cared greatly to serve God and the king,
And keep the Nelson touch;

And fought to build Britain above the tide
Of wars and windy fate;
And passed content, leaving to us the pride
Of lives obscurely great.

Laudabunt Alii

(After Horace)

LET others praise, as fancy wills,
Berlin beneath her trees,
Or Rome upon her seven hills,
Or Venice by her seas;
Stamboul by double tides embraced,
Or green Damascus in the waste.

For me there's nought I would not leave
For the good Devon land,
Whose orchards down the echoing cleeve
Bedewed with spray-drift stand,
And hardly bear the red fruit up
That shall be next year's cider-cup.

You too, my friend, may wisely mark
How clear skies follow rain,
And lingering in your own green park
Or drilled on Laffan's Plain,
Forget not with the festal bowl
To soothe at times your weary soul.

When Drake must bid to Plymouth Hoe
  Good-bye for many a day,
And some were sad that feared to go,
  And some that dared not stay,
Be sure he bade them broach the best
And raised his tankard with the rest.

"Drake's luck to all that sail with Drake
  For promised lands of gold!
Brave lads, whatever storms may break,
  We've weathered worse of old!
To-night the loving-cup we'll drain,
To-morrow for the Spanish Main!"

Admiral Death

BOYS, are ye calling a toast to-night ?
(Hear what the sea-wind saith)
Fill for a bumper strong and bright,
And here's to Admiral Death !
He's sailed in a hundred builds o' boat,
He's fought in a thousand kinds o' coat,
He's the senior flag of all that float,
And his name's Admiral Death !

Which of you looks for a service free ?
(Hear what the sea-wind saith)
The rules o' the service are but three
When ye sail with Admiral Death.
Steady your hand in time o' squalls,
Stand to the last by him that falls,
And answer clear to the voice that calls,
" Ay, ay ! Admiral Death ! "

How will ye know him among the rest ?
(Hear what the sea-wind saith)
By the glint o' the stars that cover his breast
Ye may find Admiral Death.

By the forehead grim with an ancient scar,
By the voice that rolls like thunder far,
By the tenderest eyes of all that are,
Ye may know Admiral Death.

Where are the lads that sailed before ?
(Hear what the sea-wind saith)
Their bones are white by many a shore,
They sleep with Admiral Death.
Oh ! but they loved him, young and old,
For he left the laggard, and took the bold,
And the fight was fought, and the story's told,
And they sleep with Admiral Death.

Homeward Bound

AFTER long labouring in the windy ways,
On smooth and shining tides
Swiftly the great ship glides,
Her storms forgot, her weary watches past;
Northward she glides, and through the enchanted haze
Faint on the verge her far hope dawns at last.

The phantom sky-line of a shadowy down,
Whose pale white cliffs below
Through sunny mist aglow
Like noon-day ghosts of summer moonshine gleam—
Soft as old sorrow, bright as old renown,
There lies the home of all our mortal dream.

The King's Highway

WHEN moonlight flecks the cruiser's decks
And engines rumble slow,
When Drake's own star is bright above
And Time has gone below,
They may hear who list the far-off sound
Of a long-dead never-dead mirth,
In the mid watch still they may hear who will
The Song of the Larboard Berth.

In a dandy frigate or a well-found brig,
In a sloop or a seventy-four,
In a great Firstrate with an Admiral's flag
And a hundred guns or more,
In a fair light air, in a dead foul wind,
At midnight or midday,
Till the good ship sink her mids shall drink
To the King and the King's Highway!

The mids they hear—no fear, no fear!
They know their own ship's ghost:
Their young blood beats to the same old song
And roars to the same old toast.

So long as the sea-wind blows unbound
And the sea-wave breaks in spray,
For the Island's sons the word still runs—
"The King, and the King's Highway!"

A Chanty of the Emden

THE captain of the *Emden*
He spread his wireless net,
And told the honest British tramp
Where raiders might be met:
Where raiders might be met, my lads,
And where the coast was clear,
And there he sat like a crafty cat
And sang while they drew near—
"Now you come along with me, sirs,
You come along with me!
You've had your run, old England's done,
And it's time you were home from sea!"

The seamen of old England
They doubted his intent,
And when he hailed, "Abandon ship!"
They asked him what he meant:
They asked him what he meant, my lads,
The pirate and his crew,
But he said, "Stand by! your ship must die,
And it's luck you don't die too!

So you come along with me, sirs,
You come along with me:
We find our fun now yours is done,
And it's time you were home from sea!"

He took her, tramp or trader,
He sank her like a rock,
He stole her coal and sent her down
To Davy's deep-sea dock:
To Davy's deep-sea dock, my lads,
The finest craft afloat,
And as she went he still would sing
From the deck of his damned old boat—
"Now you come along with me, sirs,
You come along with me:
Your good ship's done with wind and sun,
And it's time you were home from sea!"

The captain of the *Sydney*
He got the word by chance;
Says he, "By all the Southern Stars,
We'll make the pirates dance:
We'll make the pirates dance, my lads,
That this mad work have made,
For no man knows how a hornpipe goes
Until the music's played.
So you come along with me, sirs,
You come along with me:
The game's not won till the rubber's done,
And it's time to be home from sea!"

The *Sydney* and the *Emden*
They went it shovel and tongs,
The *Emden* had her rights to prove,
The *Sydney* had her wrongs:
The *Sydney* had her wrongs, my lads,
And a crew of South Sea blues;
Their hearts were hot, and as they shot
They sang like kangaroos—
"Now you come along with me, sirs,
You come along with me:
You've had your fun, you ruddy old Hun,
And it's time you were home from sea!"

The *Sydney* she was straddled,
But the *Emden* she was strafed,
They knocked her guns and funnels out,
They fired her fore and aft:
They fired her fore and aft, my lads,
And while the beggar burned
They salved her crew to a tune they knew,
But never had rightly learned—
"Now you come along with me, sirs,
You come along with me:
We'll find you fun till the fighting's done
And the pirate's off the sea—
Till the pirate's off the sea, my lads,
Till the pirate's off the sea:
We'll find them fun till the fighting's done
And the pirate's off the sea!"

The Service

THE BRITISH NAVY—all our years have been
Strong in the pride of it, secure, serene.
But who, remembering wars of long ago,
Knew what to our Sea-walls we yet should owe ?
Who thought to see the hand of shameless shame
With scraps of paper set the world aflame,
Barbarian hordes upon a neighbouring coast
Rape, massacre, enslave, blaspheme and boast,
And savage monsters, lurking under sea,
Murder the wives and children of the free ?
If in this battle with a power accurst
We have risked all and yet escaped the worst,
Thanks be to those who gave us ships and guns
When generous folly still would trust in Huns ;
Thanks be to those who trained upon the deep
The valour and the skill that never sleep ;
Thanks above all to those who fight our fight
For Britain's honour and for all men's right.

And now away ! away ! put off with me
From this dear island to the open sea :
Enter those floating ramparts on the foam
Where exiled seamen guard their long-lost home :
Enter and ask—except of child or wife—
Ask the whole secret of their ordered life.

Their wisdom has three words, unwrit, untold,
But handed down from heart to heart of old :
The first is this : while ships are ships the aim
Of every man aboard is still the same.
On land there's something men self-interest call,
Here each must save himself by saving all.
Your danger's mine : who thinks to stand aside
When the ship's buffeted by wind and tide ?
If she goes down, we know that we go too—
Not just the watch on deck, but all the crew.
Mark now what follows—no half-willing work
From minds divided or from hands that shirk,
But that one perfect freedom, that content
Which comes of force for something greater spent,
And welds us all, from conning tower to keel,
In one great fellowship of tempered steel.

The third is like to these :—there is no peace
In the sea-life, our warfare does not cease.
The great emergency in which we strain
With all our force, our passion and our pain,
Is no mere transient fight with hostile kings,
But mortal war against immortal things—
Danger and Death themselves, whose end shall be
When there is no more wind and no more sea.

What of this sea-born wisdom ? Is it not
Truth that on land we have too long forgot ?
While this great ship the Commonwealth's afloat
Are we not seamen all, and in one boat ?

Have we not all one freedom, lost and found
When to one service body and soul are bound ?
And is not life itself, if seen aright,
A great emergency, an endless fight
For all men's native land, and worth the price
Of all men's service and their sacrifice ?

Ah ! had we that sea-wisdom, could we steer
By those same stars for even half the year,
How plain would seem, as viewed from armoured decks,
The problems that our longshore hearts perplex !
Less than his uttermost then none would give,
More than his just reward would none receive,
No ! nor desire it, for to feast or hoard
While the next table shows a hungry board,
Whatever modern landmade laws may say
Is not the custom of Trafalgar's Bay.
The Brotherhood, the Service, Life at War,
These are the bonds that hold where heroes are,
These only make the men who weary not,
The men who fall rejoicing, self-forgot.

Come back to that unfading afternoon
Where Jutland echoes to the First of June
And Beatty raging with a lion's might
Roars out his heart to keep the foe from flight.
The Grand Fleet comes at last ; the day is ours ;
Mile beyond mile the line majestic towers :
The battle bends : Hood takes the foremost place
With the grand manner of his famous race,

Beats off the giant Hindenburg, and then
Goes down, pursuing still, with all his men.
Not all!—out yonder where the sun shall set
Four last Invincibles are floating yet,
Abandoned, doomed, but cheering to the last
As dreadnought after dreadnought thunders past:
Cheering for joy to see, though they must die,
The van of Life-victorious sweeping by.

My friends, I do not ask for men like these
A little dole, a little time of ease.
For them and all who love them, all who mourn,
And all that to their faith shall yet be born,
I ask you this—take them for what they are,
Your Comrades in the Service, Life at War.

Gillespie

RIDING at dawn, riding alone,
Gillespie left the town behind;
Before he turned by the Westward road
A horseman crossed him, staggering blind.

"The Devil's abroad in false Vellore,
The Devil that stabs by night," he said,
"Women and children, rank and file,
Dying and dead, dying and dead."

Without a word, without a groan,
Sudden and swift Gillespie turned,
The blood roared in his ears like fire,
Like fire the road beneath him burned.

He thundered back to Arcot gate,
He thundered up through Arcot town,
Before he thought a second thought
In the barrack yard he lighted down.

"Trumpeter, sound for the Light Dragoons,
Sound to saddle and spur," he said;
"He that is ready may ride with me,
And he that can may ride ahead."

Fierce and fain, fierce and fain,
Behind him went the troopers grim,
They rode as ride the Light Dragoons,
But never a man could ride with him.

Their rowels ripped their horses' sides,
Their hearts were red with a deeper goad,
But ever alone before them all
Gillespie rode, Gillespie rode.

Alone he came to false Vellore,
The walls were lined, the gates were barred;
Alone he walked where the bullets bit,
And called above to the Sergeant's Guard.

"Sergeant, Sergeant, over the gate,
Where are your officers all?" he said;
Heavily came the Sergeant's voice,
"There are two living and forty dead."

"A rope, a rope," Gillespie cried:
They bound their belts to serve his need;
There was not a rebel behind the wall
But laid his barrel and drew his bead.

There was not a rebel among them all
But pulled his trigger and cursed his aim,
For lightly swung and rightly swung
Over the gate Gillespie came.

He dressed the line, he led the charge,
They swept the wall like a stream in spate,
And roaring over the roar they heard
The galloper guns that burst the gate.

Fierce and fain, fierce and fain,
The troopers rode the reeking flight:
The very stones remember still
The end of them that stab by night.

They've kept the tale a hundred years,
They'll keep the tale a hundred more:
Riding at dawn, riding alone,
Gillespie came to false Vellore.

Seringapatam

"THE sleep that Tippoo Sahib sleeps
Heeds not the cry of man;
The faith that Tippoo Sahib keeps
No judge on earth may scan;
He is the lord of whom ye hold
Spirit and sense and limb,
Fetter and chain are all ye gain
Who dared to plead with him."

Baird was bonny and Baird was young,
His heart was strong as steel,
But life and death in the balance hung,
For his wounds were ill to heal.
"Of fifty chains the Sultan gave
We have filled but forty-nine:
We dare not fail of the perfect tale
For all Golconda's mine."

That was the hour when Lucas first
Leapt to his long renown;
Like summer rains his anger burst,
And swept their scruples down.

"Tell ye the lord to whom ye crouch,
His fetters bite their fill:
To save your oath I'll wear them both,
And step the lighter still."

The seasons came, the seasons passed,
They watched their fellows die;
But still their thought was forward cast,
Their courage still was high.
Through tortured days and fevered nights
Their limbs alone were weak,
And year by year they kept their cheer,
And spoke as freemen speak.

But once a year, on the fourth of June,
Their speech to silence died,
And the silence beat to a soundless tune
And sang with a wordless pride;
Till when the Indian stars were bright,
And bells at home would ring,
To the fetters' clank they rose and drank
"England! God save the King!"

The years came, and the years went,
The wheel full-circle rolled;
The tyrant's neck must yet be bent,
The price of blood be told:
The city yet must hear the roar
Of Baird's avenging guns,
And see him stand with lifted hand
By Tippoo Sahib's sons.

The lads were bonny, the lads were young,
But he claimed a pitiless debt;
Life and death in the balance hung,
They watched it swing and set.
They saw him search with sombre eyes,
They knew the place he sought;
They saw him feel for the hilted steel,
They bowed before his thought.

But he—he saw the prison there
In the old quivering heat,
Where merry hearts had met despair
And died without defeat;
Where feeble hands had raised the cup
For feebler lips to drain,
And one had worn with smiling scorn
His double load of pain.

"The sleep that Tippoo Sahib sleeps
Hears not the voice of man;
The faith that Tippoo Sahib keeps
No earthly judge may scan;
For all the wrong your father wrought
Your father's sons are free;
Where Lucas lay no tongue shall say
That Mercy bound not me."

A Ballad of John Nicholson

IT fell in the year of Mutiny,
At darkest of the night,
John Nicholson by Jalándhar came,
On his way to Delhi fight.

And as he by Jalándhar came
He thought what he must do,
And he sent to the Rajah fair greeting,
To try if he were true.

"God grant your Highness length of days,
And friends when need shall be;
And I pray you send your Captains hither,
That they may speak with me."

On the morrow through Jalándhar town
The Captains rode in state;
They came to the house of John Nicholson
And stood before the gate.

The chief of them was Mehtab Singh,
He was both proud and sly;
His turban gleamed with rubies red,
He held his chin full high.

He marked his fellows how they put
Their shoes from off their feet;
"Now wherefore make ye such ado
These fallen lords to greet?

"They have ruled us for a hundred years,
In truth I know not how,
But though they be fain of mastery,
They dare not claim it now."

Right haughtily before them all
The durbar hall he trod,
With rubies red his turban gleamed,
His feet with pride were shod.

They had not been an hour together,
A scanty hour or so,
When Mehtab Singh rose in his place
And turned about to go.

Then swiftly came John Nicholson
Between the door and him,
With anger smouldering in his eyes
That made the rubies dim.

"You are overhasty, Mehtab Singh,"—
Oh, but his voice was low!
He held his wrath with a curb of iron,
That furrowed cheek and brow.

"You are overhasty, Mehtab Singh,
When that the rest are gone,
I have a word that may not wait
To speak with you alone."

The Captains passed in silence forth
And stood the door behind;
To go before the game was played
Be sure they had no mind.

But there within John Nicholson
Turned him on Mehtab Singh,
"So long as the soul is in my body
You shall not do this thing.

"Have ye served us for a hundred years
And yet ye know not why?
We brook no doubt of our mastery,
We rule until we die.

"Were I the one last Englishman
Drawing the breath of life,
And you the master-rebel of all
That stir this land to strife—

"Were I," he said, "but a Corporal,
And you a Rajput King,
So long as the soul was in my body
You should not do this thing.

"Take off, take off those shoes of pride,
Carry them whence they came;
Your Captains saw your insolence
And they shall see your shame."

When Mehtab Singh came to the door
His shoes they burned his hand,
For there in long and silent lines
He saw the Captains stand.

When Mehtab Singh rode from the gate
His chin was on his breast:
The Captains said, "When the strong command
Obedience is best."

The Guides at Cabul

(1879)

SONS of the Island Race, wherever ye dwell,
Who speak of your fathers' battles with lips that burn,
The deed of an alien legion hear me tell,
And think not shame from the hearts ye tamed to learn,
When succour shall fail and the tide for a season turn,
To fight with a joyful courage, a passionate pride,
To die at the last as the Guides at Cabul died.

For a handful of seventy men in a barrack of mud,
Foodless, waterless, dwindling one by one,
Answered a thousand yelling for English blood
With stormy volleys that swept them gunner from gun,
And charge on charge in the glare of the Afghan sun,
Till the walls were shattered wherein they crouched at bay,
And dead or dying half of the seventy lay.

Twice they had taken the cannon that wrecked their hold,
Twice toiled in vain to drag it back,
Thrice they toiled, and alone, wary and bold,
Whirling a hurricane sword to scatter the rack,
Hamilton, last of the English, covered their track.
"Never give in!" he cried, and he heard them shout,
And grappled with death as a man that knows not doubt.

And the Guides looked down from their smouldering
barrack again,
And behold, a banner of truce, and a voice that spoke:
"Come, for we know that the English all are slain,
We keep no feud with men of a kindred folk;
Rejoice with us to be free of the conqueror's yoke."
Silence fell for a moment, then was heard
A sound of laughter and scorn, and an answering word.

"Is it we or the lords we serve who have earned this
wrong,
That ye call us to flinch from the battle they bade us
fight?
We that live—do ye doubt that our hands are strong?
They that have fallen—ye know that their blood was
bright!
Think ye the Guides will barter for lust of the light
The pride of an ancient people in warfare bred,
Honour of comrades living, and faith to the dead?"

Then the joy that spurs the warrior's heart
To the last thundering gallop and sheer leap
Came on the men of the Guides; they flung apart
The doors not all their valour could longer keep;
They dressed their slender line; they breathed deep,
And with never a foot lagging or head bent,
To the clash and clamour and dust of death they went.

The Gay Gordons

(Dargai, October 20th, 1897)

WHO'S for the Gathering, who's for the Fair ?
(*Gay goes the Gordon to a fight*)
The bravest of the brave are at dead-lock there,
(*Highlanders ! march ! by the right !*)
There are bullets by the hundred buzzing in the air ;
There are bonny lads lying on the hillside bare ;
But the Gordons know what the Gordons dare
When they hear the pipers playing !

The happiest English heart to-day
(*Gay goes the Gordon to a fight*)
Is the heart of the Colonel, hide it as he may.
(*Steady there ! steady on the right !*)
He sees his work and he sees the way,
He knows his time and the word to say,
And he's thinking of the tune that the Gordons play
When he sets the pipers playing !

Rising, roaring, rushing like the tide,
(*Gay goes the Gordon to a fight*)
They're up through the fire-zone, not to be denied ;
(*Bayonets ! and charge ! by the right !*)

Thirty bullets straight where the rest went wide,
And thirty lads are lying on the bare hillside;
But they passed in the hour of the Gordons' pride,
To the skirl of the pipers' playing.

The Toy Band

A Song of the Great Retreat

DREARY lay the long road, dreary lay the town,
Lights out and never a glint o' moon:
Weary lay the stragglers, half a thousand down,
Sad sighed the weary big Dragoon.
"Oh! if I'd a drum here to make them take the road again,
Oh! if I'd a fife to wheedle, Come, boys, come!
You that mean to fight it out, wake and take your load again,
Fall in! Fall in! Follow the fife and drum!

"Hey, but here's a toy shop, here's a drum for me,
Penny whistles too to play the tune!
Half a thousand dead men soon shall hear and see
We're a band!" said the weary big Dragoon.
"Rubadub! Rubadub! Wake and take the road again,
Wheedle-deedle-deedle-dee, Come, boys, come!
You that mean to fight it out, wake and take your load again,
Fall in! Fall in! Follow the fife and drum!"

Cheerly goes the dark road, cheerly goes the night,
Cheerly goes the blood to keep the beat:
Half a thousand dead men marching on to fight
With a little penny drum to lift their feet.
Rubadub! Rubadub! Wake and take the road again,
Wheedle-deedle-deedle-dee, Come, boys, come!
You that mean to fight it out, wake and take your load again,
Fall in! Fall in! Follow the fife and drum!

As long as there's an Englishman to ask a tale of me,
As long as I can tell the tale aright,
We'll not forget the penny whistle's wheedle-deedle-dee
And the big Dragoon a-beating down the night,
Rubadub! Rubadub! Wake and take the road again,
Wheedle-deedle-deedle-dee, Come, boys, come!
You that mean to fight it out, wake and take your load again,
Fall in! Fall in! Follow the fife and drum!

A Letter From the Front

I WAS out early to-day, spying about
From the top of a haystack—such a lovely morning—
And when I mounted again to canter back
I saw across a field in the broad sunlight
A young gunner subaltern, stalking along
With a rook-rifle held at the ready and—would you believe it ?—
A domestic cat, soberly marching behind him.

So I laughed, and felt quite well-disposed to the youngster,
And shouted out "The top of the morning" to him,
And wished him "Good sport!"—and then I remembered
My rank, and his, and what I ought to be doing;
And I rode nearer, and added, "I can only suppose
You have not seen the Commander-in-Chief's orders
Forbidding English officers to annoy their Allies
By hunting and shooting."
But he stood and saluted
And said earnestly, "I beg your pardon, sir,
I was only going out to shoot a sparrow
To feed my cat with."

So there was the whole picture—
The lovely early morning, the occasional shell
Screeching and scattering past us, the empty landscape—
Empty, except for the young gunner saluting
And the cat, anxiously watching his every movement.

I may be wrong, and I may have told it badly,
But it struck *me* as being extremely ludicrous.

He Fell Among Thieves

"YE have robbed," said he, "ye have slaughtered
and made an end,
Take your ill-got plunder, and bury the dead:
What will ye more of your guest and sometime friend?"
"Blood for our blood," they said.

He laughed: "If one may settle the score for five,
I am ready; but let the reckoning stand till day:
I have loved the sunlight as dearly as any alive."
"You shall die at dawn," said they.

He flung his empty revolver down the slope,
He climbed alone to the Eastward edge of the trees;
All night long in a dream untroubled of hope
He brooded, clasping his knees.

He did not hear the monotonous roar that fills
The ravine where the Yassin river sullenly flows;
He did not see the starlight on the Laspur hills,
Or the far Afghan snows.

He saw the April noon on his books aglow,
The wistaria trailing in at the window wide ;
He heard his father's voice from the terrace below
Calling him down to ride.

He saw the gray little church across the park,
The mounds that hide the loved and honoured dead ;
The Norman arch, the chancel softly dark,
The brasses black and red.

He saw the School Close, sunny and green,
The runner beside him, the stand by the parapet wall,
The distant tape, and the crowd roaring between
His own name over all.

He saw the dark wainscot and timbered roof,
The long tables, and the faces merry and keen ;
The College Eight and their trainer dining aloof,
The Dons on the daïs serene.

He watched the liner's stem ploughing the foam,
He felt her trembling speed and the thrash of her screw ;
He heard her passengers' voices talking of home,
He saw the flag she flew.

And now it was dawn. He rose strong on his feet,
And strode to his ruined camp below the wood ;
He drank the breath of the morning cool and sweet ;
His murderers round him stood.

Light on the Laspur hills was broadening fast,
The blood-red snow-peaks chilled to a dazzling white:
He turned, and saw the golden circle at last,
Cut by the Eastern height.

"O glorious Life, Who dwellest in earth and sun,
I have lived, I praise and adore Thee."
A sword swept.
Over the pass the voices one by one
Faded, and the hill slept.

Ionicus

I live—I am old—I return to the ground—
Blow trumpets ! and still I can dream to the sound.
WILLIAM CORY.

WITH failing feet and shoulders bowed
Beneath the weight of happier days,
He lagged among the heedless crowd,
Or crept along suburban ways.
But still through all his heart was young,
His mood a joy that nought could mar,
A courage, a pride, a rapture, sprung
Of the strength and splendour of England's war.

From ill-requited toil he turned
To ride with Picton and with Pack,
Among his grammars inly burned
To storm the Afghan mountain-track.
When midnight chimed, before Quebec
He watched with Wolfe till the morning star ;
At noon he saw from *Victory's* deck
The sweep and splendour of England's war.

Beyond the book his teaching sped,
  He left on whom he taught the trace
Of kinship with the deathless dead,
  And faith in all the Island Race.
He passed: his life a tangle seemed,
  His age from fame and power was far;
But his heart was high to the end, and dreamed
  Of the sound and splendour of England's war.

The Non-Combatant

AMONG a race high-handed, strong of heart,
Sea-rovers, conquerors, builders in the waste,
He had his birth ; a nature too complete,
Eager and doubtful, no man's soldier sworn
And no man's chosen captain ; born to fail,
A name without an echo : yet he too
Within the cloister of his narrow days
Fulfilled the ancestral rites, and kept alive
The eternal fire ; it may be, not in vain ;
For out of those who dropped a downward glance
Upon the weakling huddled at his prayers,
Perchance some looked beyond him, and then first
Beheld the glory, and what shrine it filled,
And to what Spirit sacred : or perchance
Some heard him chanting, though but to himself,
The old heroic names : and went their way :
And hummed his music on the march to death.

The War Films

O LIVING pictures of the dead,
O songs without a sound,
O fellowship whose phantom tread
Hallows a phantom ground—
How in a gleam have these revealed
The faith we had not found.

We have sought God in a cloudy Heaven,
We have passed by God on earth:
His seven sins and his sorrows seven,
His wayworn mood and mirth,
Like a ragged cloak have hid from us
The secret of his birth.

Brother of men, when now I see
The lads go forth in line,
Thou knowest my heart is hungry in me
As for thy bread and wine:
Thou knowest my heart is bowed in me
To take their death for mine.

St. George's Day

YPRES, 1915

TO fill the gap, to bear the brunt
With bayonet and with spade,
Four hundred to a four-mile front
Unbacked and undismayed—
What men are these, of what great race,
From what old shire or town,
That run with such goodwill to face
Death on a Flemish down?

Let be! they bind a broken line:
As men die, so die they.
Land of the free! their life was thine,
It is St. George's Day.

Yet say whose ardour bids them stand
At bay by yonder bank,
Where a boy's voice and a boy's hand
Close up the quivering rank.

Who under those all-shattering skies
  Plays out his captain's part
With the last darkness in his eyes
  And *Domum* in his heart?

Let be, let be! in yonder line
  All names are burned away.
Land of his love! the fame be thine,
  It is St. George's Day.

Hic Jacet

QUI IN HOC SAECULO FIDELITER MILITAVIT

HE that has left hereunder
The signs of his release
Feared not the battle's thunder
Nor hoped that wars should cease;
No hatred set asunder
His warfare from his peace.

Nor feared he in his sleeping
To dream his work undone,
To hear the heathen sweeping
Over the lands he won;
For he has left in keeping
His sword unto his son.

Sacramentum Supremum

YE that with me have fought and failed and fought
To the last desperate trench of battle's crest,
Not yet to sleep, not yet; our work is nought;
On that last trench the fate of all may rest.
Draw near, my friends; and let your thoughts be high;
Great hearts are glad when it is time to give;
Life is no life to him that dares not die,
And death no death to him that dares to live.

Draw near together; none be last or first;
We are no longer names, but one desire;
With the same burning of the soul we thirst,
And the same wine to-night shall quench our fire.
Drink! to our fathers who begot us men,
To the dead voices that are never dumb;
Then to the land of all our loves, and then
To the long parting, and the age to come.

Clifton Chapel

THIS is the Chapel: here, my son,
Your father thought the thoughts of youth,
And heard the words that one by one
The touch of Life has turned to truth.
Here in a day that is not far,
You too may speak with noble ghosts
Of manhood and the vows of war
You made before the Lord of Hosts.

To set the cause above renown,
To love the game beyond the prize,
To honour, while you strike him down,
The foe that comes with fearless eyes;
To count the life of battle good,
And dear the land that gave you birth,
And dearer yet the brotherhood
That binds the brave of all the earth—

My son, the oath is yours: the end
Is His, Who built the world of strife,
Who gave His children Pain for friend,
And Death for surest hope of life.

To-day and here the fight's begun,
  Of the great fellowship you're free;
Henceforth the School and you are one,
  And what You are, the race shall be.

God send you fortune: yet be sure,
  Among the lights that gleam and pass,
You'll live to follow none more pure
  Than that which glows on yonder brass.
"*Qui procul hinc*," the legend's writ,—
  The frontier-grave is far away—
"*Qui ante diem periit:*
  Sed miles, sed pro patriâ."

Vitaï Lampada

THERE'S a breathless hush in the Close to-night—
Ten to make and the match to win—
A bumping pitch and a blinding light,
An hour to play and the last man in.
And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,
Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,
But his Captain's hand on his shoulder smote—
"Play up! play up! and play the game!"

The sand of the desert is sodden red,—
Red with the wreck of a square that broke;—
The Gatling's jammed and the Colonel dead,
And the regiment blind with dust and smoke.
The river of death has brimmed his banks,
And England's far, and Honour a name,
But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks:
"Play up! play up! and play the game!"

This is the word that year by year,
While in her place the School is set,
Every one of her sons must hear,
And none that hears it dare forget.

This they all with a joyful mind
  Bear through life like a torch in flame,
And falling fling to the host behind—
  "Play up! play up! and play the game!"

The Vigil

ENGLAND! where the sacred flame
Burns before the inmost shrine,
Where the lips that love thy name
Consecrate their hopes and thine,
Where the banners of thy dead
Weave their shadows overhead,
Watch beside thine arms to-night,
Pray that God defend the Right.

Think that when to-morrow comes
War shall claim command of all,
Thou must hear the roll of drums,
Thou must hear the trumpet's call.
Now before they silence ruth,
Commune with the voice of truth;
England! on thy knees to-night
Pray that God defend the Right.

Hast thou counted up the cost,
What to foeman, what to friend?
Glory sought is Honour lost,
How should this be knighthood's end?

Know'st thou what is Hatred's meed ?
What the surest gain of Greed ?
England ! wilt thou dare to-night
Pray that God defend the Right ?

Single-hearted, unafraid,
  Hither all thy heroes came,
On this altar's steps were laid
  Gordon's life and Outram's fame.
England ! if thy will be yet
By their great example set,
Here beside thine arms to-night
Pray that God defend the Right.

So shalt thou when morning comes
  Rise to conquer or to fall,
Joyful hear the rolling drums,
  Joyful hear the trumpets call.
Then let Memory tell thy heart ;
" *England ! what thou wert, thou art !* "
Gird thee with thine ancient might,
Forth ! and God defend the Right !

To Belgium, 1914

THE boast of legions, and the boast
  Of them that foster slaves for sons,
The triumph of the huger host,
  The vaunt of more gigantic guns—
These for an hour may fill the air
With cries of the primeval lair.

The fame of freedom and the fame
  Of them that dared deny the accurst,
The glory of the least in name,
  Who steeled their souls to battle first—
These are the crown of noble strife,
Man's hope and his enduring life.

The doom of heroes and the doom
  Of them who shed the innocent blood
Are sundered still in yonder tomb
  Beneath the all-enshrouding mud ;
The scourge of earth in earth shall rot,
But faith shall live when fear is not.

The Sailing of the Long-ships

(October, 1899)

THEY saw the cables loosened, they saw the gangways cleared,
They heard the women weeping, they heard the men that cheered;
Far off, far off, the tumult faded and died away,
And all alone the sea-wind came singing up the Bay.

"I came by Cape St. Vincent, I came by Trafalgar,
I swept from Torres Vedras to golden Vigo Bar,
I saw the beacons blazing that fired the world with light
When down their ancient highway your fathers passed to fight.

"O race of tireless fighters, flushed with a youth renewed,
Right well the wars of Freedom befit the Sea-kings' brood;
Yet as ye go forget not the fame of yonder shore,
The fame ye owe your fathers and the old time before.

"Long-suffering were the Sea-kings, they were not swift to kill,
But when the sands had fallen they waited no man's will;
Though all the world forbade them, they counted not nor cared,
They weighed not help or hindrance, they did the thing they dared.

"The Sea-kings loved not boasting, they cursed not him that cursed,
They honoured all men duly, and him that faced them, first;
They strove and knew not hatred, they smote and toiled to save,
They tended whom they vanquished, they praised the fallen brave.

"Their fame's on Torres Vedras, their fame's on Vigo Bar,
Far-flashed to Cape St. Vincent it burns from Trafalgar;
Mark as ye go the beacons that woke the world with light
When down their ancient highway your fathers passed to fight."

Waggon Hill

DRAKE in the North Sea grimly prowling,
Treading his dear *Revenge's* deck,
Watched, with the sea-dogs round him growling,
Galleons drifting wreck by wreck.
"Fetter and Faith for England's neck,
Faggot and Father, Saint and chain,—
Yonder the Devil and all go howling,
Devon, O Devon, in wind and rain!"

Drake at the last off Nombre lying,
Knowing the night that toward him crept,
Gave to the sea-dogs round him crying
This for a sign before he slept:—
"Pride of the West! What Devon hath kept
Devon shall keep on tide or main;
Call to the storm and drive them flying,
Devon, O Devon, in wind and rain!"

Valour of England gaunt and whitening,
Far in a South land brought to bay,

Locked in a death-grip all day tightening,
Waited the end in twilight gray.
Battle and storm and the sea-dog's way!
Drake from his long rest turned again,
Victory lit thy steel with lightning,
Devon, O Devon, in wind and rain!

The Volunteer

"HE leapt to arms unbidden,
Unneeded, over-bold;
His face by earth is hidden,
His heart in earth is cold.

"Curse on the reckless daring
That could not wait the call,
The proud fantastic bearing
That would be first to fall!"

O tears of human passion,
Blur not the image true;
This was not folly's fashion,
This was the man we knew.

The Only Son

O BITTER wind toward the sunset blowing
What of the dales to-night ?
In yonder gray old hall what fires are glowing,
What ring of festal light ?

" *In the great window as the day was dwindling*
I saw an old man stand ;
His head was proudly held and his eyes kindling,
But the list shook in his hand."

O wind of twilight, was there no word uttered,
No sound of joy or wail ?
" ' *A great fight and a good death,' he muttered ;*
' Trust him, he would not fail.' "

What of the chamber dark where she was lying
For whom all life is done ?
" *Within her heart she rocks a dead child, crying*
' My son, my little son.' "

The Grenadier's Good-Bye

"When Lieutenant Murray fell, the only words he spoke were, 'Forward, Grenadiers!'"—*Press Telegram.*

HERE they halted, here once more
Hand from hand was rent;
Here his voice above the roar
Rang, and on they went.
Yonder out of sight they crossed,
Yonder died the cheers;
One word lives where all is lost—
"Forward, Grenadiers!"

This alone he asked of fame,
This alone of pride;
Still with this he faced the flame,
Answered Death, and died.
Crest of battle sunward tossed,
Song of the marching years,
This shall live though all be lost—
"Forward, Grenadiers!"

The Schoolfellow

OUR game was his but yesteryear;
We wished him back; we could not know
The selfsame hour we missed him here
He led the line that broke the foe.

Blood-red behind our guarded posts
Sank as of old the dying day;
The battle ceased; the mingled hosts
Weary and cheery went their way:

"To-morrow well may bring," we said,
"As fair a fight, as clear a sun."
Dear lad, before the word was sped,
For evermore thy goal was won.

On Spion Kop

FOREMOST of all on battle's fiery steep
Here VERTUE fell, and here he sleeps his sleep.*
A fairer name no Roman ever gave
To stand sole monument on Valour's grave.

* Major N. H. Vertue, of the Buffs, Brigade-Major to General Woodgate, was buried where he fell, on the edge of Spion Kop, in front of the British position.

The School at War

ALL night before the brink of death
In fitful sleep the army lay,
For through the dream that stilled their breath
Too gauntly glared the coming day.

But we, within whose blood there leaps
The fulness of a life as wide
As Avon's water where he sweeps
Seaward at last with Severn's tide,

We heard beyond the desert night
The murmur of the fields we knew,
And our swift souls with one delight
Like homing swallows Northward flew.

We played again the immortal games,
And grappled with the fierce old friends,
And cheered the dead undying names,
And sang the song that never ends ;

Till, when the hard, familiar bell
Told that the summer night was late,
Where long ago we said farewell
We said farewell by the old gate.

"O Captains unforgot," they cried,
"Come you again or come no more,
Across the world you keep the pride,
Across the world we mark the score."

By the Hearth-Stone

BY the hearth-stone
She sits alone,
The long night bearing:
With eyes that gleam
Into the dream
Of the firelight staring.

Low and more low
The dying glow
Burns in the embers;
She nothing heeds
And nothing needs—
Only remembers.

Peace

(1902)

NO more to watch by Night's eternal shore,
With England's chivalry at dawn to ride;
No more defeat, faith, victory—O! no more
A cause on earth for which we might have died.

April on Waggon Hill

LAD, and can you rest now,
There beneath your hill ?
Your hands are on your breast now,
But is your heart so still ?
'Twas the right death to die, lad,
A gift without regret,
But unless truth's a lie, lad,
You dream of Devon yet.

Ay, ay, the year's awaking,
The fire's among the ling,
The beechen hedge is breaking,
The curlew's on the wing ;
Primroses are out, lad,
On the high banks of Lee,
And the sun stirs the trout, lad,
From Brendon to the sea.

I know what's in your heart, lad,—
The mare he used to hunt—
And her blue market-cart, lad,
With posies tied in front—

We miss them from the moor road,
They're getting old to roam,
The road they're on's a sure road
And nearer, lad, to home.

Your name, the name they cherish?
'Twill fade, lad, 'tis true:
But stone and all may perish
With little loss to you.
While fame's fame you're Devon, lad,
The Glory of the West;
Till the roll's called in heaven, lad,
You may well take your rest.

The Fourth of August

A Masque

[*The Scene discloses a garden at dawn, with Sun-fays, Shadow-elves, and Spirits of the Flowers sleeping under a twilight sky and pale stars. The east lightens and the stars fade.*

Enter Aurora with her train: she goes about the garden and wakes the Fays, Elves, and Spirits, who dance and sing.]

SONG OF THE SHADOW-ELVES

ALL about the garden,
All about the garden,
All about the garden
The silent shadows creep.

In and out the roses,
In and out the roses,
In and out the roses
The morning shadows creep.

Close around the dial,
Close around the dial,
Close around the dial
The noonday shadows creep.

Far across to fayland,
Far across to fayland,
Far across to fayland
The sunset shadows creep.

All in one great shadow,
All in one great shadow,
All in one great shadow
The midnight shadows sleep.

[*As they sing Aurora passes on and disappears.*]

[*Enter a Mortal Youth, delicately dressed: he stretches himself on a green bank languidly, and muses.*]

How I love life! how fair and full it glides
In this dear land, where age-long peace abides!
This land of Nature's finest fashioning,
Where every month brings forth some lovely thing:
Where Spring goes like her streams, from March to June,
Dancing and glittering to the breeze's tune;
And Summer, like the rose in sunset skies,
From splendour into splendour softly dies;
Where Autumn, while she sings her harvest home,
Deep in her bosom hides the birth to come,
And Winter dreams, when the long nights are cold,
A dream of snowdrops and the bleating fold.
Ah! how I love it!—most of all the year
This perfect month when Summer's end is near.
For now July has set, and August dawns,
A stillness broods upon the yellowing lawns,

Now senses all are by enchantment laid
In golden sleep beneath a green-gold shade,
Until the hour when twilight's tender gloom
Is starred with flowers of magic faint perfume.
Now passions are forgot, now memory wakes
And out of old delight new vision makes,
While Time moves only where the rose-leaves fall,
And Death's a shade that never moves at all.

[*He muses on in silence.*]

SONG OF THE FLOWER-SPIRITS

Winter's over and Summer's here:
Dance over the fairy ring!
Winter's over and Summer's here,
And the gay birds sing!

Roses flourish and roses fall:
Dance over the fairy ring!
Lilies are white and lupins tall,
And the gay birds sing!

What shall we do when Summer's dead?
Wind over the fairy ring!
Then you must sleep in Winter's bed,
And no birds sing!

What shall we do when Winter's done?
Wind over the fairy ring?
Then you must wake and greet the sun,
And the gay birds sing!

Winter's over and Summer's here:
Dance over the fairy ring!
Now comes in the sweet o' the year,
And the gay birds sing!

[*Enter a Veiled Figure, who stands over against the drowsing Youth and speaks.*]

Seek not to lift my veil, ask not my name.
I have no name—I am the spirit's breath,
The soul's own blood, the secret spring of life.
O Child of Earth and Sky, lighten thine eyes,
See what thou art in truth—no fading flower,
No beast of prey, no dust enjoying dust,
No fluttering thing for mere salvation wild,
No passing shadow on the dial of Time—
What, then? Look in thy heart; what life hast thou
That dust and shadows lack, what life beyond
The life of flower or beast? Have these the power
To live for something greater, to resign
Even in the sunlit moment of their strength
Their separate being?
I am that which bids thee
Die and outlive thyself: I am the Voice
That all thy heroes heard. When their long toil
Bowed down their burning shoulders, when they built
Thy peace with their despair, when bitter seas
Rolled over them, when battle broke their hearts
This was their life in death—then, then they heard

My voice, their voice, the voice within them, saying
" All's lost, all's won ; the gift is perfected ! "

[*The Veiled Figure remains standing at the back of the scene.*]

[*The faint booming of a gun is heard : the Youth stirs and speaks again to himself.*]

How still the air is—faint and far away
I hear the booming of the guns at play—
Far, far away, and faint as though it came
From that old world of battle smoke and flame
To stir again in hearts no longer hot
An ember-glow of passions long forgot.

[*The booming is heard again, louder.*]

The sound comes nearer—almost it would seem
Insistent to be mingled with my dream.
What then ?—War cannot touch my garden, set
Between four seas that never failed me yet !
And though that madness all the rest should take—
Or for revenge's or dominion's sake—
I have sown peace and what men sow they reap ;
I have no foe to wrong my golden sleep.

[*He sinks back and sleeps again.*]

SONG OF THE SUN-FAYS

Here in your garden green and fair
Soft you may sleep and know not care :
Sleep in your Paradise under the sky
And we will sing your lullaby.

Sunlit above you leaves are cool,
Sunlit beside you gleams the pool,
Sunlit and slumberous Summer goes by
And we will sing your lullaby.

[*They sink down upon the grass: the stillness of the garden becomes one with the Youth's dream.*

Enter, as in a vision of that dream, a Mother and her two Boys: the Boys see the Fays and run towards them, but are stayed by a sudden throb of guns.

Enter from behind the Veiled Figure a Boy with a Drum: he marches up to the two Mortal Children, touches them on the breast and signs to them to follow him. The Mother darts forward and lays her arms around them, speaking to the Boy with the Drum, in great alarm.]

MOTHER. Why do you call them?
BOY. They must come with me.
MOTHER. Is it for life or death?
BOY. I cannot tell:
I never heard of Death.
MOTHER. Who bade you call them?
BOY. A woman with a veil—she stands there waiting.
MOTHER. I see her now—her veil is close as night,
But her face shines beneath it, like the fire
Of the first star that mounts his guard in heaven.
I see her lifted hand, I hear her voice
Like thunder rolling among distant hills,
Instant, tremendous, irresistible,

Soul-shaking, world-destroying—
O my children !—
The end of our sweet life—the end is come !

[*She bows her head over the Children, clasping them tightly. A funeral march is heard: the Boy beats his drum to it and turns to go: the mother listens in agony, still holding back her children. The funeral march changes to a high triumphant movement: she rises, and after a moment opens her arms. The Children kiss her and march joyfully away: she lifts her head with the same proud gesture as theirs, and follows them slowly and at a distance.*]

MOTHER. Farewell, my sons! The world is changed for me:
But this too you have done—your joy has fanned
My smouldering altar-fires, your pride has burned
To flame and fragrance all my balm of earth—
Child memories, high-built hopes, comfort of love,
Yea ! even the touch, the sight and hearing of you—
All's lost, all's won : the gift is perfected !

[*She goes out.*]

[*The Youth starts up and speaks.*]

How long have I been sleeping ? Now this place
Is changed, as though after a hundred years
That which lay bound by some ignoble spell
Had heard a silver trumpet, leapt afoot,
And marched with tramp of thousands to the fight.
Surely I heard that call—surely it came
Ringing with countless echoes of old wars :
With tender pity, red indignant wrath,

White cold resolve and hatred of the beast,
Courage that knows not fear, courage that knows
And knowing dares a hundred deaths in one,
Freedom that lives by service, kindliness
That even in anger keeps men's brotherhood,
And love of country, that high passionate pride
In the old visions of a generous race,
Not yet fulfilled, but never yet forsaken—
Ay! these I heard, and all my blood remembers
That so my fathers heard them.
Oh! I had seen
My garden with dull eyes; that which was mine—
The best of my inheritance—the sight
Of those immortal ghosts whose living glory
For ever haunts the home of their renown—
I had lost it till this moment!
Now I wake:
I know what I have loved, I see again
Beneath the beauty of life perishing
That which transfigures, that which makes the world
Of life enduring.
If there must be death
Let it be mine! If there must be defeat
Let it be mine, my Country, and not thine!
Let it be mine! I hear a voice within me—
All's lost, all's won!—the gift is perfected!

[*He marches away proudly, to the same music.*]

[*The Fays dance again silently: the sun sets, and they sink to sleep. The Veiled Figure moves forward again, and stands motionless where the Youth had lain dreaming. The Curtain falls.*]

A Ballad of Sir Pertab Singh

IN the first year of him that first
Was Emperor and King,
A rider came to the Rose-red House,
The House of Pertab Singh.

Young he was and an Englishman,
And a soldier, hilt and heel,
And he struck fire in Pertab's heart
As the steel strikes on steel.

Beneath the morning stars they rode,
Beneath the evening sun,
And their blood sang to them as they rode
That all good wars are one.

They told their tales of the love of women,
Their tales of East and West,
But their blood sang that of all their loves
They loved a soldier best.

So ran their joy the allotted days,
Till at the last day's end
The Shadow stilled the Rose-red House
And the heart of Pertab's friend.

When morning came, in narrow chest
The soldier's face they hid,
And over his fast-dreaming eyes
Shut down the narrow lid.

Three were there of his race and creed,
Three only and no more:
They could not find to bear the dead
A fourth in all Jodhpore.

"O Maharaj, of your good grace
Send us a Sweeper here:
A Sweeper has no caste to lose
Even by an alien bier."

"What need, what need?" said Pertab Singh,
And bowed his princely head.
"I have no caste, for I myself
Am bearing forth the dead."

"O Maharaj, O passionate heart,
Be wise, bethink you yet:
That which you lose to-day is lost
Till the last sun shall set."

"God only knows," said Pertab Singh,
"That which I lose to-day:
And without me no hand of man
Shall bear my friend away."

Stately and slow and shoulder-high
In the sight of all Jodhpore
The dead went down the rose-red steps
Upheld by bearers four.

. . . . .

When dawn relit the lamp of grief
Within the burning East
There came a word to Pertab Singh,
The soft word of a priest.

He woke, and even as he woke
He went forth all in white,
And saw the Brahmins bowing there
In the hard morning light.

"Alas! O Maharaj, alas!
O noble Pertab Singh!
For here in Jodhpore yesterday
Befell a fearful thing.

"O here in Jodhpore yesterday
A fearful thing befell."
"A fearful thing," said Pertab Singh,
"God and my heart know well—

"I lost a friend."
"More fearful yet!
When down these steps you past
In sight of all Jodhpore you lost—
O Maharaj!—your caste."

Then leapt the light in Pertab's eyes
As the flame leaps in smoke,
"Thou priest! thy soul hath never known
The word thy lips have spoke.

"My caste! Know thou there is a caste
Above my caste or thine,
Brahmin and Rajput are but dust
To that immortal line:

"Wide as the world, free as the air,
Pure as the pool of death—
The caste of all Earth's noble hearts
Is the right soldier's faith."

Commemoration

I SAT by the granite pillar, and sunlight fell
Where the sunlight fell of old,
And the hour was the hour my heart remembered well,
And the sermon rolled and rolled
As it used to roll when the place was still unhaunted,
And the strangest tale in the world was still untold.

And I knew that of all this rushing of urgent sound
That I so clearly heard,
The green young forest of saplings clustered round
Was heeding not one word:
Their heads were bowed in a still serried patience
Such as an angel's breath could never have stirred.

For some were already away to the hazardous pitch,
Or lining the parapet wall,
And some were in glorious battle, or great and rich,
Or throned in a college hall:
And among the rest was one like my own young phantom,
Dreaming for ever beyond my utmost call.

"O Youth," the preacher was crying, "deem not thou
Thy life is thine alone;
Thou bearest the will of the ages, seeing how
They built thee bone by bone,
And within thy blood the Great Age sleeps sepulchred
Till thou and thine shall roll away the stone.

"Therefore the days are coming when thou shalt burn
With passion whitely hot;
Rest shall be rest no more; thy feet shall spurn
All that thy hand hath got;
And One that is stronger shall gird thee, and lead thee swiftly
Whither, O heart of Youth, thou wouldest not."

And the School passed; and I saw the living and dead
Set in their seats again,
And I longed to hear them speak of the word that was said,
But I knew that I longed in vain.
And they stretched forth their hands, and the wind of the spirit took them
Lightly as drifted leaves on an endless plain.

The Echo

Of a Ballad Sung by H. Plunket Greene to his old School

TWICE three hundred boys were we,
Long ago, long ago,
Where the Downs look out to the Severn Sea.
Clifton for aye!
We held by the game and hailed the team,
For many could play where few could dream.
City of Song shall stand alway.

Some were for profit and some for pride,
Long ago, long ago,
Some for the flag they lived and died.
Clifton for aye!
The work of the world must still be done,
And minds are many though truth be one.
City of Song shall stand alway.

But a lad there was to his fellows sang,
Long ago, long ago,
And soon the world to his music rang.
Clifton for aye!

Follow your Captains, crown your Kings,
But what will ye give to the lad that sings ?
City of Song shall stand alway.

For the voice ye hear is the voice of home,
Long ago, long ago,
And the voice of Youth with the world to roam.
Clifton for aye !
The voice of passion and human tears,
And the voice of the vision that lights the years.
City of Song shall stand alway.

The Best School of All

IT'S good to see the School we knew,
The land of youth and dream,
To greet again the rule we knew
Before we took the stream :
Though long we've missed the sight of her,
Our hearts may not forget ;
We've lost the old delight of her,
We keep her honour yet.

We'll honour yet the School we knew,
The best School of all :
We'll honour yet the rule we knew,
Till the last bell call.
For, working days or holidays,
And glad or melancholy days,
They were great days and jolly days
At the best School of all.

The stars and sounding vanities
That half the crowd bewitch,
What are they but inanities
To him that treads the pitch ?

And where's the wealth, I'm wondering,
Could buy the cheers that roll
When the last charge goes thundering
Beneath the twilight goal ?

The men that tanned the hide of us,
Our daily foes and friends,
They shall not lose their pride of us,
Howe'er the journey ends.
Their voice, to us who sing of it,
No more its message bears,
But the round world shall ring of it
And all we are be theirs.

To speak of Fame a venture is,
There's little here can bide,
But we may face the centuries,
And dare the deepening tide :
For though the dust that's part of us
To dust again be gone,
Yet here shall beat the heart of us—
The School we handed on !

We'll honour yet the School we knew,
The best School of all :
We'll honour yet the rule we knew,
Till the last bell call.
For, working days or holidays,
And glad or melancholy days,
They were great days and jolly days
At the best School of all.

England

PRAISE thou with praise unending
The Master of the Wine :
To all their portions sending
Himself he mingled thine :

The sea-born flush of morning,
The sea-born hush of night,
The East wind comfort scorning,
And the North wind driving right :

The world for gain and giving,
The game for man and boy,
The life that joys in living,
The faith that lives in joy.

Victoria Regina

(JUNE 21ST, 1897 [1])

A THOUSAND years by sea and land
Our race hath served the island kings,
But not by custom's dull command
To-day with song her Empire rings:

Not all the glories of her birth,
Her armed renown and ancient throne,
Could make her less the child of earth
Or give her hopes beyond our own:

But stayed on faith more sternly proved
And pride than ours more pure and deep,
She loves the land our fathers loved
And keeps the fame our sons shall keep.

[1] These lines, with music by Dr. Lloyd, formed part of the *Cycle of Song* offered to Queen Victoria, of blessed and glorious memory, in celebration of her second Jubilee.

The King of England

(June 24th, 1902)

IN that eclipse of noon when joy was hushed
Like the bird's song beneath unnatural night,
And Terror's footfall in the darkness crushed
The rose imperial of our delight,
Then, even then, though no man cried "He comes,"
And no man turned to greet him passing there,
With phantom heralds challenging renown
And silent-throbbing drums
I saw the King of England, hale and fair,
Ride out with a great train through London town.

Unarmed he rode, but in his ruddy shield
The lions bore the dint of many a lance,
And up and down his mantle's azure field
Were strewn the lilies plucked in famous France.
Before him went with banner floating wide
The yeoman breed that served his honour best,
And mixed with these his knights of noble blood;
But in the place of pride
His admirals in billowy lines abreast
Convoyed him close like galleons on the flood.

Full of a strength unbroken showed his face
And his brow calm with youth's unclouded dawn,
But round his lips were lines of tenderer grace
Such as no hand but Time's hath ever drawn.
Surely he knew his glory had no part
In dull decay, nor unto Death must bend,
Yet surely too of lengthening shadows dreamed
With sunset in his heart,
So brief his beauty now, so near the end,
And now so old and so immortal seemed.

O King among the living, these shall hail
Sons of thy dust that shall inherit thee:
O King of men that die, though we must fail
Thy life is breathed from thy triumphant sea.
O man that servest men by right of birth,
Our hearts' content thy heart shall also keep,
Thou too with us shalt one day lay thee down
In our dear native earth,
Full sure the King of England, while we sleep,
For ever rides abroad through London town.

The Nile

OUT of the unknown South,
Through the dark lands of drouth,
Far wanders ancient Nile in slumber gliding:
Clear-mirrored in his dream
The deeds that haunt his stream
Flash out and fade like stars in midnight sliding.
Long since, before the life of man
Rose from among the lives that creep,
With Time's own tide began
That still mysterious sleep,
Only to cease when Time shall reach the eternal deep.

From out his vision vast
The early gods have passed,
They waned and perished with the faith that made them;
The long phantasmal line
Of Pharaohs crowned divine
Are dust among the dust that once obeyed them.
Their land is one mute burial mound,
Save when across the drifted years
Some chant of hollow sound,
Some triumph blent with tears,
From Memnon's lips at dawn wakens the desert meres.

O Nile, and can it be
No memory dwells with thee
  Of Grecian lore and the sweet Grecian singer?
The legions' iron tramp,
The Goths' wide-wandering camp,
  Had these no fame that by thy shore might linger?
Nay, then must all be lost indeed,
  Lost too the swift pursuing might
That cleft with passionate speed
  Aboukir's tranquil night,
  And shattered in mid-swoop the great world-eagle's
    flight.

Yet have there been on earth
Spirits of starry birth,
  Whose splendour rushed to no eternal setting:
They over all endure,
Their course through all is sure,
  The dark world's light is still of their begetting.
Though the long past forgotten lies,
  Nile! in thy dream remember him,
Whose like no more shall rise
  Above our twilight's rim,
  Until the immortal dawn shall make all glories dim.

For this man was not great
By gold or kingly state,
  Or the bright sword, or knowledge of earth's wonder;
But more than all his race
He saw life face to face,
  And heard the still small voice above the thunder.

O river, while thy waters roll
  By yonder vast deserted tomb,
There, where so clear a soul
  So shone through gathering doom,
Thou and thy land shall keep the tale of lost Khartoum.

Sráhmandázi

DEEP embowered beside the forest river,
Where the flame of sunset only falls,
Lapped in silence lies the House of Dying,
House of them to whom the twilight calls.

There within when day was near to ending,
By her lord a woman young and strong,
By his chief a songman old and stricken
Watched together till the hour of song.

"O my songman, now the bow is broken,
Now the arrows one by one are sped,
Sing to me the song of Sráhmandázi,
Sráhmandázi, home of all the dead."

Then the songman, flinging wide his songnet,
On the last token laid his master's hand,
While he sang the song of Sráhmandázi,
None but dying men can understand.

"Yonder sun that fierce and fiery-hearted
Marches down the sky to vanish soon,
At the self-same hour in Sráhmandázi
Rises pallid like the rainy moon.

"There he sees the heroes by their river,
Where the great fish daily upward swim;
Yet they are but shadows hunting shadows,
Phantom fish in waters drear and dim.

"There he sees the kings among their headmen,
Women weaving, children playing games;
Yet they are but shadows ruling shadows,
Phantom folk with dim forgotten names.

"Bid farewell to all that most thou lovest,
Tell thy heart thy living life is done;
All the days and deeds of Sráhmandázi
Are not worth an hour of yonder sun."

Dreamily the chief from out the songnet
Drew his hand and touched the woman's head:
"Know they not, then, love in Sráhmandázi?
Has a king no bride among the dead?"

Then the songman answered, "O my master,
Love they know, but none may learn it there;
Only souls that reach that land together
Keep their troth and find the twilight fair.

"Thou art still a king, and at thy passing
By thy latest word must all abide:
If thou willest, here am I, thy songman;
If thou lovest, here is she, thy bride."

Hushed and dreamy lay the House of Dying,
Dreamily the sunlight upward failed,
Dreamily the chief on eyes that loved him
Looked with eyes the coming twilight veiled.

Then he cried, "My songman, I am passing;
Let her live, her life is but begun;
All the days and nights of Sráhmandázi
Are not worth an hour of yonder sun."

Yet, when there within the House of Dying
The last silence held the sunset air,
Not alone he came to Sráhmandázi,
Not alone she found the twilight fair:

While the songman, far beneath the forest
Sang of Sráhmandázi all night through,
"Lovely be thy name, O Land of shadows,
Land of meeting, Land of all the true!"

Outward Bound

DEAR Earth, near Earth, the clay that made us men,
The land we sowed,
The hearth that glowed—
O Mother, must we bid farewell to thee ?
Fast dawns the last dawn, and what shall comfort then
The lonely hearts that roam the outer sea ?

Gray wakes the daybreak, the shivering sails are set,
To misty deeps
The channel sweeps—
O Mother, think on us who think on thee !
Earth-home, birth-home, with love remember yet
The sons in exile on the eternal sea.

Hope the Hornblower

"HARK ye, hark to the winding horn ;
Sluggards, awake, and front the morn !
Hark ye, hark to the winding horn ;
The sun's on meadow and mill.
Follow me, hearts that love the chase ;
Follow me, feet that keep the pace :
Stirrup to stirrup we ride, we ride,
We ride by moor and hill."

Huntsman, huntsman, whither away ?
What is the quarry afoot to-day ?
Huntsman, huntsman, whither away,
And what the game ye kill ?
Is it the deer, that men may dine ?
Is it the wolf that tears the kine ?
What is the race ye ride, ye ride,
Ye ride by moor and hill ?

"Ask not yet till the day be dead
What is the game that's forward fled,
Ask not yet till the day be dead
The game we follow still.

An echo it may be, floating past ;
A shadow it may be, fading fast :
Shadow or echo, we ride, we ride,
We ride by moor and hill."

O Pulchritudo

O SAINT whose thousand shrines our feet have trod
And our eyes loved thy lamp's eternal beam,
Dim earthly radiance of the Unknown God,
Hope of the darkness, light of them that dream,
Far off, far off and faint, O glimmer on
Till we thy pilgrims from the road are gone.

O Word whose meaning every sense hath sought,
Voice of the teeming field and grassy mound,
Deep-whispering fountain of the wells of thought,
Will of the wind and soul of all sweet sound,
Far off, far off and faint, O murmur on
Till we thy pilgrims from the road are gone.

The Final Mystery

This myth, of Egyptian origin, formed part of the instruction given to those initiated in the Orphic mysteries, and written versions of it were buried with the dead.

HEAR now, O Soul, the last command of all—
When thou hast left thine every mortal mark,
And by the road that lies beyond recall
Won through the desert of the Burning Dark,
Thou shalt behold within a garden bright
A well, beside a cypress ivory-white.

Still is that well, and in its waters cool
White, white and windless, sleeps that cypress tree:
Who drinks but once from out her shadowy pool
Shall thirst no more to all eternity.
Forgetting all, by all forgotten clean,
His soul shall be with that which hath not been.

But thou, though thou be trembling with thy dread,
And parched with thy desire more fierce than flame,
Think on the stream wherefrom thy life was fed,
And that diviner fountain whence it came.
Turn thee and cry—behold, it is not far—
Unto the hills where living waters are.

"Lord, though I lived on earth, the child of earth,
Yet was I fathered by the starry sky:
Thou knowest I came not of the shadows' birth,
Let me not die the death that shadows die.
Give me to drink of the sweet spring that leaps
From Memory's fount, wherein no cypress sleeps."

Then shalt thou drink, O Soul, and therewith slake
The immortal longing of thy mortal thirst;
So of thy Father's life shalt thou partake,
And be for ever that thou wert at first.
Lost in remembered loves, yet thou more thou
With them shalt reign in never-ending *Now*.

Il Santo

ALAS ! alas ! what impious hands are these ?
They have cut down my dark mysterious trees,
Defied the brooding spell
That sealed my sacred well,
Broken my fathers' fixed and ancient bars,
And on the mouldering shade
Wherein my dead were laid
Let in the cold clear aspect of the stars.

Slumber hath held the grove for years untold :
Is there no reverence for a peace so old ?
Is there no seemly awe
For bronze-engraven law,
For dust beatified and saintly name ?
When they shall see the shrine
Princes have held divine,
Will they not bow before the eternal flame ?

Vain ! vain ! the wind of heaven for ages long
Hath whispered manhood, " Let thine arm be strong !
Hew down and fling away
The growth that veils decay,

Shatter the shrine that chokes the living spring.
Scorn hatred, scorn regret,
Dig deep and deeper yet,
Leave not the quest for word of saint or king.

" Dig deeper yet ! though the world brand thee now,
The faithful labour of an impious brow
May for thy race redeem
The source of that lost stream
Once given the thirst of all the earth to slake.
Nay, thou too ere the end
Thy weary knee mayst bend
And in thy trembling hands that water take."

In July

HIS beauty bore no token,
No sign our gladness shook;
With tender strength unbroken
The hand of Life he took:
But the summer flowers were falling,
Falling and fading away,
And mother birds were calling,
Crying and calling
For their loves that would not stay.

He knew not Autumn's chillness,
Nor Winter's wind nor Spring's;
He lived with Summer's stillness
And sun and sunlit things:
But when the dusk was falling
He went the shadowy way,
And one more heart is calling,
Crying and calling
For the love that would not stay.

From Generation to Generation

O SON of mine, when dusk shall find thee bending
Between a gravestone and a cradle's head—
Between the love whose name is loss unending
And the young love whose thoughts are liker dread,—
Thou too shalt groan at heart that all thy spending
Cannot repay the dead, the hungry dead.

When I Remember

WHEN I remember that the day will come
For this our love to quit his land of birth,
And bid farewell to all the ways of earth
With lips that must for evermore be dumb,

Then creep I silent from the stirring hum,
And shut away the music and the mirth,
And reckon up what may be left of worth
When hearts are cold and love's own body numb.

Something there must be that I know not here,
Or know too dimly through the symbol dear;
Some touch, some beauty, only guessed by this—
If He that made us loves, it shall replace,
Beloved, even the vision of thy face
And deep communion of thine inmost kiss.

Mors Janua

PILGRIM, no shrine is here, no prison, no inn :
Thy fear and thy belief alike are fond :
Death is a gate, and holds no room within :
Pass—to the road beyond.

Rondel[1]

THOUGH I wander far-off ways,
Dearest, never doubt thou me:

Mine is not the love that strays,
Though I wander far-off ways:

Faithfully for all my days
I have vowed myself to thee:
Though I wander far-off ways,
Dearest, never doubt thou me.

1 This and the two following pieces are from the French of Wenceslas, Duke of Brabant and Luxembourg, who died in 1384.

Rondel

LONG ago to thee I gave
Body, soul, and all I have—
Nothing in the world I keep :

All that in return I crave
Is that thou accept the slave
Long ago to thee I gave—
Body, soul, and all I have.

Had I more to share or save,
I would give as give the brave,
Stooping not to part the heap ;
Long ago to thee I gave
Body, soul, and all I have—
Nothing in the world I keep.

Balade

I CANNOT tell, of twain beneath this bond,
Which one in grief the other goes beyond,—
Narcissus, who to end the pain he bore
Died of the love that could not help him more;
Or I, that pine because I cannot see
The lady who is queen and love to me.

Nay—for Narcissus, in the forest pond
Seeing his image, made entreaty fond,
"Beloved, comfort on my longing pour":
So for a while he soothed his passion sore;
So cannot I, for all too far is she—
The lady who is queen and love to me.

But since that I have Love's true colours donned,
I in his service will not now despond,
For in extremes Love yet can all restore:
So till her beauty walks the world no more
All day remembered in my hope shall be
The lady who is queen and love to me.

The Last Word

BEFORE the April night was late
A rider came to the castle gate ;
A rider breathing human breath,
But the words he spoke were the words of Death.

" Greet you well from the King our lord,
He marches hot for the eastward ford ;
Living or dying, all or one,
Ye must keep the ford till the race be run."

Sir Alain rose with lips that smiled,
He kissed his wife, he kissed his child :
Before the April night was late
Sir Alain rode from the castle gate.

He called his men-at-arms by name,
But one there was uncalled that came :
He bade his troop behind him ride,
But there was one that rode beside.

" *Why will you spur so fast to die ?*
Be wiser ere the night go by.
A message late is a message lost ;
For all your haste the foe had crossed.

" Are men such small unmeaning things
To strew the board of smiling Kings?
With life and death they play their game,
And life or death, the end's the same."

Softly the April air above
Rustled the woodland homes of love:
Softly the April air below
Carried the dream of buds that blow.

" Is he that bears a warrior's fame
To shun the pointless stroke of shame?
Will he that propped a trembling throne
Not stand for right when right's his own?

" Your oath on the four gospels sworn?
What oath can bind resolves unborn?
You lose that far eternal life?
Is it yours to lose? Is it child and wife?"

But now beyond the pathway's bend,
Sir Alain saw the forest end,
And winding wide beneath the hill,
The glassy river lone and still.

And now he saw with lifted eyes
The East like a great chancel rise,
And deep through all his senses drawn,
Received the sacred wine of dawn.

He set his face to the stream below,
He drew his axe from the saddle bow :
" Farewell, Messire, the night is sped ;
There lies the ford, when all is said."

The Viking's Song

WHEN I thy lover first
Shook out my canvas free
And like a pirate burst
Into that dreaming sea,
The land knew no such thirst
As then tormented me.

Now when at eve returned
I near that shore divine,
Where once but watch-fires burned
I see thy beacon shine,
And know the land hath learned
Desire that welcomes mine.

The Sufi in the City

I

WHEN late I watched the arrows of the sleet
Against the windows of the Tavern beat,
I heard a Rose that murmured from her Pot :
" Why trudge thy fellows yonder in the Street ?

II

" Before the phantom of False Morning dies,
Choked in the bitter Net that binds the skies,
Their feet, bemired with Yesterday, set out
For the dark alleys where To-morrow lies.

III

" Think you, when all their petals they have bruised,
And all the fragrances of Life confused,
That Night with sweeter rest will comfort these
Than us, who still within the Garden mused ?

IV

"Think you the Gold they fight for all day long
Is worth the frugal Peace their clamours wrong?
Their Titles, and the Name they toil to build—
Will they outlast the echoes of our Song?"

V

O Sons of Omar, what shall be the close
Seek not to know, for no man living knows:
But while within your hands the Wine is set
Drink ye—to Omar and the Dreaming Rose!

To Edward Fitzgerald

(March 31st, 1909)

'TIS a sad fate
To watch the world fighting,
All that is most fair
Ruthlessly blighting,
Blighting, ah! blighting.

When such a thought cometh
Let us not pine,
But gather old friends
Round the red wine—
Oh! pour the red wine!

And there we'll talk
And warm our wits
With Eastern fallacies
Out of old Fitz!
British old Fitz!

See him, half statesman—
Philosopher too—
Half ancient mariner
In baggy blue—
Such baggy blue!

Whimsical, wistful,
Haughty, forsooth:
Indolent always, yet
Ardent in truth,
But indolent, indolent!

There at the table
With us sits he,
Charming us subtly
To reverie,
Magic reverie.

"How sweet is summer's breath,
How sure and swift is death;
Nought wise on earth, save
What the wine whispereth,
Dreamily whispereth.

"At Naíshapúr beneath the sun,
Or here in misty Babylon,
Drink! for the rose leaves while you linger
Are falling, ever falling, one by one."

Ah! poet's soul, once more with us conspire
To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
Once more with us to-night, old Fitz, once more
Remould it nearer to the heart's desire!

Yattendon

AMONG the woods and tillage
That fringe the topmost downs,
All lonely lies the village,
Far off from seas and towns.
Yet when her own folk slumbered
I heard within her street
Murmur of men unnumbered
And march of myriad feet.

For all she lies so lonely,
Far off from towns and seas,
The village holds not only
The roofs beneath her trees:
While Life is sweet and tragic
And Death is veiled and dumb,
Hither, by singer's magic,
The pilgrim world must come.

Devon

DEEP-WOODED combes, clear-mounded hills of morn,
Red sunset tides against a red sea-wall,
High lonely barrows where the curlews call,
Far moors that echo to the ringing horn,—
Devon ! thou spirit of all these beauties born,
All these are thine, but thou art more than all :
Speech can but tell thy name, praise can but fall
Beneath the cold white sea-mist of thy scorn.

Yet, yet, O noble land, forbid us not
Even now to join our faint memorial chime
To the fierce chant wherewith their hearts were hot
Who took the tide in thy Imperial prime ;
Whose glory's thine till Glory sleeps forgot
With her ancestral phantoms, Pride and Time.

Among the Tombs

SHE is a lady fair and wise,
Her heart her counsel keeps,
And well she knows of time that flies
And tide that onward sweeps ;
But still she sits with restless eyes
Where Memory sleeps—
Where Memory sleeps.

Ye that have heard the whispering dead
In every wind that creeps,
Or felt the stir that strains the lead
Beneath the mounded heaps,
Tread softly, ah ! more softly tread
Where Memory sleeps—
Where Memory sleeps.

Gold

(After Giovanni Pascoli)

AT bedtime, when the sunset fire was red
One cypress turned to gold beneath its touch.
"Sleep now, my little son," the mother said;
"In God's high garden all the trees are such."
Then did the child in his bright dream behold
Branches of gold, trees, forests all of gold.

A Sower

WITH sanguine looks
And rolling walk
Among the rooks
He loved to stalk,

While on the land
With gusty laugh
From a full hand
He scattered chaff.

Now that within
His spirit sleeps
A harvest thin
The sickle reaps ;

But the dumb fields
Desire his tread,
And no earth yields
A wheat more red.

The Mossrose

WALKING to-day in your garden, O gracious lady,
Little you thought as you turned in that alley remote and shady,
And gave me a rose and asked if I knew its savour—
The old-world scent of the mossrose, flower of a bygone favour—

Little you thought as you waited the word of appraisement,
Laughing at first and then amazed at my amazement,
That the rose you gave was a gift already cherished,
And the garden whence you plucked it a garden long perished.

But I—I saw that garden, with its one treasure
The tiny mossrose, tiny even by childhood's measure,
And the long morning shadow of the dusty laurel,
And a boy and a girl beneath it, flushed with a childish quarrel.

She wept for her one little bud : but he, outreaching
The hand of brotherly right, would take it for all her beseeching :

And she flung her arms about him, and gave like a sister,
And laughed at her own tears, and wept again when he
kissed her.

So the rose is mine long since, and whenever I find it
And drink again the sharp sweet scent of the moss
behind it,
I remember the tears of a child, and her love and her
laughter,
And the morning shadows of youth and the night that
fell thereafter.

Ave, Soror

I LEFT behind the ways of care,
The crowded hurrying hours,
I breathed again the woodland air,
I plucked the woodland flowers :

Bluebells as yet but half awake,
Primroses pale and cool,
Anemones like stars that shake
In a green twilight pool—

On these still lay the enchanted shade,
The magic April sun ;
With my own child a child I strayed
And thought the years were one.

As through the copse she went and came
My senses lost their truth ;
I called her by the dear dead name
That sweetened all my youth.

To a River in the South

CALL me no more, O gentle stream,
To wander through thy sunny dream,
No more to lean at twilight cool
Above thy weir and glimmering pool.

Surely I know thy hoary dawns,
The silver crisp on all thy lawns,
The softly swirling undersong
That rocks thy reeds the winter long.

Surely I know the joys that ring
Through the green deeps of leafy spring;
I know the elfin cups and domes
That are their small and secret homes.

Yet is the light for ever lost
That daily once thy meadows crossed,
The voice no more by thee is heard
That matched the song of stream and bird.

Call me no more!—thy waters roll
Here, in the world that is my soul,
And here, though Earth be drowned in night,
Old love shall dwell with old delight.

On the Death of a Noble Lady

TIME, when thou shalt bring again
Pallas from the Trojan plain,
Portia from the Roman's hall,
Brynhild from the fiery wall,
Eleanor, whose fearless breath
Drew the venom'd fangs of Death,
And Philippa doubly brave
Or to conquer or to save—

When thou shalt on one bestow
All their grace and all their glow,
All their strength and all their state,
All their passion pure and great,
Some far age may honour then
Such another queen of men.

Midway

TURN back, my Soul, no longer set
  Thy peace upon the years to come,
Turn back, the land of thy regret
  Holds nothing doubtful, nothing dumb.

There are the voices, there the scenes
  That make thy life in living truth
A tale of heroes and of queens,
  Fairer than all the hopes of youth.

Ad Matrem Dolorosam

THINK not thy little fountain's rain
That in the sunlight rose and flashed,
From the bright sky has fallen again,
To cold and shadowy silence dashed.
The Joy that in her radiance leapt
From everlasting hath not slept.

The hand that to thy hand was dear,
The untroubled eyes that mirrored thine,
The voice that gave thy soul to hear
A whisper of the Love Divine—
What though the gold was mixed with dust?
The gold is thine and cannot rust.

Nor fear, because thy darling's heart
No longer beats with mortal life,
That she has missed the ennobling part
Of human growth and human strife.
Only she has the eternal peace
Wherein to reap the soul's increase.

Snow-White

THE children said,
"When Christmas comes this year
Then Lucy shall be dead
And laid upon a bier:
And we," they said,
"Will stand there in our places
With dwarfish hoods of red
Hiding our faces.

"There she will be
Wrapped in her golden hair
And very still, and we
All still about her there:
Not sad nor crying,
But wondering what has come
To keep our Snow-White lying
So pale and dumb."

O play too brave!
They in their childish art
Knew not to whom they gave
That unregarded part—

How should they tell
That the brief scene they played
Might be by his sure spell
Eternal made ?

They had their will.
But when they saw her there
Lying so pale and still
Wrapped in her golden hair,
Ah ! with what tears
Their sad hearts clung about her,
Foreboding the dim years
Lost, lost, without her.

Vrais Amants

(FOURTEENTH CENTURY)

"TIME mocks thy opening music with a close.
What now he gives long since he gave away.
Thou deemst thy sun hath risen, but ere it rose
It was eclipsed, and dusk shall be thy day."

Yet has the Dawn gone up: in loveliest light
She walks high heaven beyond the shadow there:
Whom I too veiled from all men's envious sight
With inward eyes adore and silent prayer.

The Sangreal

ONCE, when beside me in that sacred place
I saw my lady lift her lovely head,
And saw the Chalice gleam above her face
And her dear lips with life immortal red,
Then, born again beyond the mist of years,
I knelt in Heaven, and drank the wine of tears.

Sir Hugh the Palmer

I

HE kneeled among a waste of sands
Before the Mother-Maid,
But on the far green forest-lands
His steadfast eyes were stayed,
And like a knight of stone his hands
He straightened while he prayed.

"Lady, beyond all women fair,
Beyond all saints benign,
Whose living heart through life I bear
In mystery divine,
Hear thou and grant me this my prayer,
Or grant no prayer of mine.

"The fever of my spirit's pain
Heal thou with heavenly scorn;
The dust that but of dust is fain
Leave thou in dust forlorn;
Yea! bury love to rise again
Meet for eternal morn.

"So by thy grace my inward eyes
Thy beauty still shall see,
And while our life in shadow lies
High dawn shall image thee,
Till with thy soul in Paradise
Thy servant's soul shall be."

Before the immortal Mother-Maid
Low on the sands he kneeled;
But even while the words he prayed
His lips to patience sealed,
Joy in his eyes a radiance made
Like stars in dusk revealed.

II

It was an idle company—
Ladies and lordings fine—
Idly under the wild-wood tree
Their laughter ran like wine.
Yet as they laughed a voice they heard—
A voice where none was seen,—
Singing blithe as a hidden bird
Among the forest green.

"Mark ye, mark ye, a lonely knight
Riding the green forest:
Pardi! for one so poorly dight
He lifts a haughty crest!

Azure and white is all his wear,
He hath no gold, I trow!
Wanderer, thou in the wild-wood there,
Tell us why sing ye so!"

"Noble ladies and lordings gay,
God have you all in guard:
Since ye are pleased with me to play,
My riddle it is not hard.
I sing because, of all that ride,
I am the least of worth:
I sing because, to match my pride,
Never was pride on earth.

"But, an ye ask what that may mean,
Thus do I answer then:
I bear with me the heart of a Queen—
I that am least of men:—
I bear her heart till the end of all,
Yea! by her own command
I bear the heart of a Queen royal
Unto the Holy Land."

Humbly there his crest he bent,—
Azure it waved and white,—
Haughtily there he turned and went
Singing, out of their sight.
Long, long but his voice they heard,—
A voice where none was seen,—
Singing blithe as a hidden bird,
Among the forest green.

The Presentation

WHEN in the womb of Time our souls' own son
Dear Love lay sleeping till his natal hour,
Long months I knew not that sweet life begun,
Too dimly treasuring thy touch of power;
And wandering all those days
By far-off ways,
Forgot immortal seed must have immortal flower.

Only, beloved, since my beloved thou art
I do remember, now that memory's vain,
How twice or thrice beneath my beating heart
Life quickened suddenly with proudest pain.
Then dreamed I Love's increase,
Yet held my peace
Till I might render thee thy own great gift again.

For as with bodies, so with souls it is,
The greater gives, the lesser doth conceive:
That thou hast fathered Love, I tell thee this,
And by my pangs beseech thee to believe.
Look on his hope divine—
Thy hope and mine—
Pity his outstretched hands, tenderly him receive!

The Inheritance

WHILE I within her secret garden walked,
The flowers, that in her presence must be dumb,
With me, their fellow-servant, softly talked,
Attending till the Flower of flowers should come.
Then, since at Court I had arrived but late,
I was by love made bold
To ask that of my lady's high estate
I might be told,
And glories of her blood, perpetuate
In histories old.

Then they, who know the chronicle of Earth,
Spoke of her loveliness, that like a flame
Far-handed down from noble birth to birth,
Gladdened the world for ages ere she came.
" Yea, yea," they said, " from Summer's royal sun
Comes that immortal line,
And was create not for this age alone
Nor wholly thine,
Being indeed a flower whose root is one
With Life Divine.

"To the sweet buds that of herself are part
Already she this portion hath bequeathed,
As, not less surely, into thy proud heart
Her nobleness, O poet, she hath breathed,
That her inheritance by them and thee
The world may keep alway,
When the still sunlight of her eyes shall be
Lost to the day,
And even the fragrance of her memory
Fading away."

Amore Altiero

SINCE thou and I have wandered from the highway
And found with hearts reborn
This swift and unimaginable byway
Unto the hills of morn,
Shall not our love disdain the unworthy uses
Of the old time outworn?

I'll not entreat thy half unwilling graces
With humbly folded palms,
Nor seek to shake thy proud defended places
With noise of vague alarms,
Nor ask against my fortune's grim pursuing
The refuge of thy arms.

Thou'lt not withhold for pleasure vain and cruel
That which has long been mine,
Nor overheap with briefly burning fuel
A fire of flame divine,
Nor yield the key for life's profaner voices
To brawl within the shrine.

But thou shalt tell me of thy queenly pleasure
All that I must fulfil,
And I'll receive from out my royal treasure
What golden gifts I will,
So that two realms supreme and undisputed
Shall be one kingdom still.

And our high hearts shall praise the beauty hidden
In starry-minded scorn
By the same Lord who hath His servants bidden
To seek with eyes new-born
This swift and unimaginable byway
Unto the hills of morn.

The Pedlar's Song

I TRAMPED among the townward throng
A sultry summer's morn :
They mocked me loud, they mocked me long,
They laughed my pack to scorn.
But a likely pedlar holds his peace
Until the reckoning's told :—
Merrily I to market went, tho' songs were all my gold.

At weary noon I left the town,
I left the highway straight,
I climbed the silent, sunlit down
And stood by a castle gate.
Never yet was a house too high
When the pedlar's heart was bold :—
Merrily I to market went, tho' songs were all my gold.

A lady leaned from her window there
And asked my wares to see ;
Her voice made rich the summer air,
Richer my soul in me.
She gave me only four little words,
Words of a language old :—
Merrily I from market came, for all my songs were sold.

Benedick's Song

THOUGH I see within thine eyes
Sudden frown of cloudy skies,
Yet I bid them "merry morn"
For they tell me Love is born.
So ha-há! with há-ha-há!
For they tell me Love is born.

Storms of mocking from thy lips
Lash me still like airy whips;
But to-day thy scorn I scorn
For I know that Love is born.
So ha-há! with há-ha-há!
For I know that Love is born.

O the hail that rattles fierce
Through my hodden cloak to pierce!
What care I if rags be torn?
Love and I are beggars born!
So ha-há! with há-ha-há!
Love and I are beggars born.

Love and Grief

ONE day, when Love and Summer both were young,
Love in a garden found my lady weeping;
Whereat, when he to kiss her would have sprung,
I stayed his childish leaping.

"Forbear," said I, "she is not thine to-day:
Subdue thyself in silence to await her;
If thou dare call her from Death's side away
Thou art no Love, but traitor.

Yet did he run, and she his kiss received,
"She is twice mine," he cried, "since she is troubled:
I knew but half, and now I see her grieved
My part in her is doubled."

Egeria's Silence

HER thought that, like a brook beside the way,
Sang to my steps through all the wandering year,
Has ceased from melody—O Love, allay
My sudden fear!

She cannot fail—the beauty of that brow
Could never flower above a desert heart—
Somewhere beneath, the well-spring even now
Lives, though apart.

Some day, when winter has renewed her fount
With cold, white-folded snows and quiet rain,
O Love, O Love, her stream again will mount
And sing again!

True Thomas

QUEEN, when we kissed beneath the Eildon tree
I kissed for ever, tide me weal or woe;
The broad and narrow ways lay far below;
Among the fern you shook your bridle free:
We dared the dark, we dared the roaring sea,
We rode for Elfland—ah! how long ago!
Body and soul you have been mine, I know.
Body and soul you have been sure of me.

Now comes the end—yet now when age shall cast
Like withered leaves into the mouldering past
The Rhymer's heart, the lips that kissed and sang,
Still, still the Elfin soul of me shall flame
To find the land wherefrom your beauty came,
The road whereon that night your bridle rang.

Clerk Saunders

NOW that the cock has crowed and I am fled
Before the day's inexorable face
Back to this underworld that is my place,
Where I must gibber with the lifelong dead—

Now that you too, where our farewell was said,
Are vainly entreating Earth of her cold grace
Whether at head or foot be any space
Where you may lie in love's last narrow bed—

Now, even now, so soon as gentle Night
Uplifts me from the clay whereto I crept,
And quickens the dead memory of delight,
And heals the wounds they dealt me while we slept,

Again would I that life, that death, begin
And thank the God that made his joy therein.

Against Oblivion

CITIES drowned in olden time
Keep, they say, a magic chime
Rolling up from far below
When the moon-led waters flow.

So within me, ocean deep,
Lies a sunken world asleep.
Lest its bells forget to ring,
Memory ! set the tide a-swing !

Fond Counsel

O YOUTH, beside thy silver-springing fountain,
In sight and hearing of thy father's cot,
These and the morning woods, the lonely mountain,
These are thy peace, although thou know'st it not.
Wander not yet where noon's unpitying glare
Beats down the toilers in the city bare;
Forsake not yet, not yet, the homely plot,
O Youth, beside thy silver-springing fountain.

Youth

HIS song of dawn outsoars the joyful bird,
Swift on the weary road his footfall comes ;
The dusty air that by his stride is stirred
Beats with a buoyant march of fairy drums.
" Awake, O Earth ! thine ancient slumber break ;
To the new day, O slumbrous Earth, awake ! "

Yet long ago that merry march began,
His feet are older than the path they tread ;
His music is the morning-song of man,
His stride the stride of all the valiant dead ;
His youngest hopes are memories, and his eyes
Deep with the old, old dream that never dies.

The Wanderer

TO Youth there comes a whisper out of the west :
"O loiterer, hasten where there waits for thee
A life to build, a love therein to nest,
And a man's work, serving the age to be."

Peace, peace awhile ! Before his tireless feet
Hill beyond hill the road in sunlight goes ;
He breathes the breath of morning, clear and sweet,
And his eyes love the high eternal snows.

The Adventurers

OVER the downs in sunlight clear
Forth we went in the spring of the year:
Plunder of April's gold we sought,
Little of April's anger thought.

Caught in a copse without defence
Low we crouched to the rain-squall dense:
Sure, if misery man can vex,
There it beat on our bended necks.

Yet when again we wander on
Suddenly all that gloom is gone:
Under and over through the wood,
Life is astir, and life is good.

Violets purple, violets white,
Delicate windflowers dancing light,
Primrose, mercury, moscatel,
Shimmer in diamonds round the dell.

Squirrel is climbing swift and lithe,
Chiff-chaff whetting his airy scythe,
Woodpecker whirrs his rattling rap,
Ringdove flies with a sudden clap.

Rook is summoning rook to build,
Dunnock his beak with moss has filled,
Robin is bowing in coat-tails brown,
Tomtit chattering upside down.

Well is it seen that every one
Laughs at the rain and loves the sun ;
We too laughed with the wildwood crew,
Laughed till the sky once more was blue.

Homeward over the downs we went
Soaked to the heart with sweet content ;
April's anger is swift to fall,
April's wonder is worth it all.

To Clare

(With a Volume of Stories from Froissart)

MY Clare,—
These tales were told, you know,
In French, five hundred years ago,
By old Sir John, whose heart's delight
Was lady sweet and valiant knight.
A hundred years went by, and then
A great lord told the tales again,
When bluff King Hal desired his folk
To read them in the tongue they spoke.
Last, I myself among them took
What I loved best and made this book.
Great, lesser, less—these writers three
Worked for the days they could not see,
And certès, in their work they knew
Nothing at all, dear child, of you.
Yet is this book your own in truth,
Because 'tis made for noble youth,
And every word that's living there
Must die when Clares are no more Clare.

The Return of Summer: An Eclogue

Scene: Ashdown Forest in May

Persons: H.—A Poet; C.—His Daughter

H. HERE then, if you insist, my daughter: still,
I must confess that I preferred the hill.
The warm scent of the pinewood seemed to me
The first true breath of summer; did you see
The waxen hurt-bells with their promised fruit
Already purple at the blossom's root,
And thick among the rusty bracken strown
Sunburnt anemones long overblown?
Summer is come at last!

C. And that is why
Mine is a better place than yours to lie.
This dark old yew tree casts a fuller shade
Than any pine; the stream is simply made
For keeping bottles cool; and when we've dined
I could just wade a bit while you . . . reclined.

H. Empty the basket then, without more words . . .
But I still wish we had not left the birds.

C. Father! you are perverse! Since when, I beg,
Have forest birds been tethered by the leg?
They're everywhere! What more can you desire
The cuckoo shouts as though he'd never tire,
The nuthatch, knowing that of noise you're fond,
Keeps chucking stones along a frozen pond,
And busy gold-crest, somewhere out of sight,
Works at his saw with all his tiny might.
I do not count the ring-doves or the rooks,
We hear so much about them in the books
They're hardly real; but from where I sit
I see two chaffinches, a long-tailed tit,
A missel-thrush, a yaffle——

H. That will do:
I may have overlooked a bird or two.
Where are the biscuits? Are you getting cramp
Down by the water there—it must be damp?

C. I'm only watching till your bottle's cool:
It lies so snug beneath this glassy pool,
Like a sunk battleship; and overhead
The water-boatmen get their daily bread
By rowing all day long, and far below
Two little eels go winding, winding slow . . .
Oh! there's a shark!

H. A what?

C. A miller's thumb.
Don't move, I'll tempt him with a tiny crumb.

H. Be quick about it, please, and don't forget
I am at least as dry as he is wet.

C. Oh, very well then, here's your drink.

H. That's good!
I feel much better now.
C. I thought you would (*exit quietly*).
H. How beautiful the world is when it breathes
The news of summer!—when the bronzy sheathes
Still hang about the beech-leaf, and the oaks
Are wearing still their dainty tasselled cloaks,
While on the hillside every hawthorn pale
Has taken now her balmy bridal veil,
And, down below, the drowsy murmuring stream
Lulls the warm noonday in an endless dream.
O little brook, far more thou art to me
Than all the pageantry of field and tree:
Es singen wohl die Nixen—ah! 'tis truth—
Tief unten ihren Reih'n—but only Youth
Can hear them joyfully, as once I lay
And heard them singing of the world's highway,
Of wandering ended, and the maiden found,
And golden bread by magic mill-wheel ground.
Lost is the magic now, the wheel is still,
And long ago the maiden left the mill:
Yet once a year, one day, when summer dawns,
The old, old murmur haunts the river-lawns,
The fairies wake, the fairy song is sung,
And for an hour the wanderer's feet are young (*he dozes*).
C. (*returning*) Father! I called you twice.
H. I did not know:
Where have you been?
C. Oh, down the stream.

H. Just so :
Well, I went *up*.
C. I wish you'd been with me.
H. When East is West, my daughter, that may be.

Dream-Market

A MASQUE PRESENTED AT WILTON HOUSE,
JULY 28, 1909

Scene. A LAWN IN THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE'S ARCADIA

Enter FLORA, *Lady of Summer, with her maidens,* PHYLLIS *and* AMARYLLIS. *She takes her seat upon a bank, playing with a basket of freshly gathered flowers, one of which she presently holds up in her hand.*

FLORA. Ah! how I love a rose! But come, my girls,
Here's for your task: to-day you, Amaryllis,
Shall take the white, and, Phyllis, you the red.
Hold out your kirtles for them. White, red, white,
Red, red, and white again. . . .
Wonder you not
How the same sun can breed such different beauties?
[*She divides all her roses between them.*
Well, take them all, and go—scatter them wide
In gardens where men love me, and be sure

Where even one flower falls, or one soft petal,
Next year shall see a hundred.

[*As they turn to go, enter* LUCIA *in hunting dress, with bow in hand and a hound by her side.* FLORA *rises to meet her, and recalls her maidens.*]

Stay ! attend me.

LUCIA. Greeting, fair ladies ; you, I think, must be
Daughters of this green Earth, and one of you
The sweet Dame Flora.

FLORA. Your true servant, madam.
But if my memory be not newly withered
I have not known the pleasure. . . .

LUCIA. Yes, you have seen me—
At least, you might have seen me ; I am Lucia,
Lady of Moonlight, and I often hunt
These downs of yours with all my nightly pack
Of questing beams and velvet-footed shadows.

FLORA. I fear at night. . . .

LUCIA. Oh, yes ! at night you are sleeping !
And I by day am always rather faint ;
So we don't meet ; but sometimes your good folk
Have torn my nets by raking in the water ;
And though their neighbours laughed, there are worse ways
Of spending time, and far worse things to rake for
Than silver lights upon a crystal stream.
But come ! My royal Sire, the Man in the Moon—
He has been here ?

FLORA. So many kings come here,
I can't be sure ; I've heard the Man in the Moon

Did once come down and ask his way to Norwich.
But that was years agone—hundreds of years—
It may not be the same—I do not know
Your royal father's age. . . .

LUCIA. His age? Oh surely!
He never *can* be more than one month old.

FLORA. Yet he's your father!

LUCIA. Well, he is and is not:
[*Proudly*] I am the daughter of a million moons.
They month by month and year by circling year,
From their celestial palace looking down
On your day-wearied Earth, have soothed her sleep,
And rocked her tides, and made a magic world
For all her lovers and her nightingales.
You owe them much, my ancestors. No doubt,
At times they suffered under clouds; at times
They were eclipsed; yet in their brighter hours
They were illustrious!

FLORA. And may I hope
Your present Sire, his present Serene Highness,
Is in his brighter hours to-day?

LUCIA. Ah! no.
Be sure he is not—else I had not left
My cool, sweet garden of unfading stars
For the rank meadows of this sun-worn mould.

FLORA. What *is* your trouble, then?

LUCIA. Although my father
Has been but ten days reigning, he is sad
With all the sadness of a phantom realm,
And all the sorrows of ten thousand years.

We in our Moonland have no life like yours,
No birth, no death: we live but in our dreams:
And when they are grown old—these mortal visions
Of an immortal sleep—we seem to lose them.
They are too strong for us, too self-sufficient
To live for us; they go their ways and leave us,
Like shadows grown substantial.

FLORA. I have heard
Something on earth not unlike this complaint;
But can I help you?

LUCIA. Lady, if you cannot,
No one can help. In Moonland there is famine,
We are losing all our dreams, and I come hither
To buy a new one for my father's house.

FLORA. To buy a dream?

LUCIA. Some little darling dream
That will be always with us, night and day,
Loving and teasing, sailing light of heart
Over our darkest deeps, reminding us
Of our lost childhood, playing our old games,
Singing our old songs, asking our old riddles,
Building our old hopes, and with our old gusto
Rehearsing for us in one endless act
The world past and the world to be.

FLORA. Oh! now
I see your meaning. Yes, I have indeed
Plenty of such sweet dreams: *we* call them children.
They are *our* dreams too, and though they are born of us,
Truly in them we live. But, dearest lady,
We do not sell them.

LUCIA. Do you mean you will not ?
Not one ? Could you not *lend* me one—just one ?
FLORA. Ah ! but to lend what cannot be returned
Is merely giving—who can bring again
Into the empty nest those wingèd years ?
Still, there are children here well worth your hopes,
And you shall venture : if there be among them
One that your heart desires, and she consent,
Take her and welcome—for the will of Love
Is the wind's will, and none may guess his going.
LUCIA. O dearest Lady Flora !
FLORA. Stay ! they are here,
Mad as a dance of May-flies.

[*The children run in dancing and singing.*

Shall we sit
And watch these children ?
Phyllis, bid them play,
And let them heed us no more than the trees
That girdle this green lawn with whispering beauty.

[*The children play and sing at their games, till at a convenient moment the* LADY FLORA *holds up her hand.*]

FLORA. Now, Amaryllis, stay the rushing stream,
The meadows for this time have drunk enough.
[*To* LUCIA.] And you, what think you, lady, of these maids ?
Has their sweet foolish singing moved your heart
To choose among them ?
LUCIA. I have heard them gladly,
And if I could, would turn them all to elves,
That if they cannot live with me, at least

I might look down when our great galleon sails
Close over earth, and see them always here
Dancing upon the moonlit shores of night.
But how to choose !—and though they are young and fair
Their every grace foretells the fatal change,
The swift short bloom of girlhood, like a flower
Passing away, for ever passing away.
Have you not one with petals tenderer yet,
More deeply folded, further from the hour
When the bud dies into the mortal rose ?

FLORA [*pointing*]. *There* is my youngest blossom and my fairest,
But my most wilful too—you'll pluck her not
Without some aid of magic.

LUCIA. Time has been
When I have known even your forest trees
Sway to a song of moonland. I will try it.

[*She sings and dances a witching measure.*]

SONG

(*To an air by* HENRY LAWES, *published in* 1652)

THE flowers that in thy garden rise,
Fade and are gone when Summer flies,
And as their sweets by time decay,
So shall thy hopes be cast away.

The Sun that gilds the creeping moss
Stayeth not Earth's eternal loss :
He is the lord of all that live,
Yet there is life he cannot give.

The stir of Morning's eager breath—
Beautiful Eve's impassioned death—
Thou lovest these, thou lovest well,
Yet of the Night thou canst not tell.

In every land thy feet may tread,
Time like a veil is round thy head:
Only the land thou seek'st with me
Never hath been nor yet shall be.

It is not far, it is not near,
Name it hath none that Earth can hear;
But there thy Soul shall build again
Memories long destroyed of men,
And Joy thereby shall like a river
Wander from deep to deep for ever.

[*When she has finished the child runs into her arms.*]

FLORA. Your spell has won her, and I marvel not:
She was but half our own.
[*To the Child*] Farewell, dear child,
'Tis time to part, you with this lovely lady
To dance in silver halls, and gather stars
And be the dream you are: while we return
To the old toil and harvest of the Earth.
Farewell! and farewell all!

ALL. Farewell! farewell!

[*Exeunt omnes.*

Song of the Children in Paladore

TO Aladore, to Aladore,
Who goes the pilgrim way?
Who goes with us to Aladore
Before the dawn of day?

O if we go the pilgrim way
Tell us, tell us true,
How do they make their pilgrimage
That walk the way with you?

O you must make your pilgrimage
By noonday and by night,
By seven years of the hard, hard road
And an hour of starry light.

O if we go by the hard, hard road
Tell us, tell us true,
What shall they find in Aladore
That walk the way with you?

You shall find dreams in Aladore
All that ever were known:
And you shall dream in Aladore
The dreams that were your own.

O then, O then to Aladore,
We'll go the pilgrim way,
To Aladore, to Aladore,
Before the dawn of day.

The Cicalas: An Idyll

Scene: An English Garden by Starlight
Persons: A Lady and a Poet

The Poet

DIMLY I see your face: I hear your breath
Sigh faintly, as a flower might sigh in death:
And when you whisper, you but stir the air
With a soft hush like summer's own despair.

The Lady (*aloud*)

O Night divine, O Darkness ever blest,
Give to our old sad Earth eternal rest.
Since from her heart all beauty ebbs away,
Let her no more endure the shame of day.

The Poet

A thousand ages have not made less bright
The stars that in this fountain shine to-night:
Your eyes in shadow still betray the gleam
That every son of man desires in dream.

THE LADY

Yes, hearts will burn when all the stars are cold;
And Beauty lingers—but her tale is told:
Mankind has left her for a game of toys,
And fleets the golden hour with speed and noise.

THE POET

Think you the human heart no longer feels
Because it loves the swift delight of wheels?
And is not Change our one true guide on earth,
The surest hand that leads us from our birth?

THE LADY

Change were not always loss, if we could keep
Beneath all change a clear and windless deep:
But more and more the tides that through us roll
Disturb the very sea-bed of the soul.

THE POET

The foam of transient passions cannot fret
The sea-bed of the race, profounder yet:
And there, where Greece and her foundations are,
Lies Beauty, built below the tide of war.

THE LADY

So—to the desert, once in fifty years—
Some poor mad poet sings, and no one hears:
But what belated race, in what far clime,
Keeps even a legend of Arcadian time?

THE POET

Not ours perhaps: a nation still so young,
So late in Rome's deserted orchard sprung,
Bears not as yet, but strikes a hopeful root
Till the soil yield its old Hesperian fruit.

THE LADY

Is not the hour gone by? The mystic strain,
Degenerate once, may never spring again.
What long-forsaken gods shall we invoke
To grant such increase to our common oak?

THE POET

Yet may the ilex, of more ancient birth,
More deeply planted in that genial earth,
From her Italian wildwood even now
Revert, and bear once more the golden bough.

THE LADY

A poet's dream was never yet less great
Because it issued through the ivory gate!
Show me one leaf from that old wood divine,
And all your ardour, all your hopes are mine.

THE POET

May Venus bend me to no harder task!
For—Pan be praised!—I hold the gift you ask.
The leaf, the legend, that your wish fulfils,
To-day he brought me from the Umbrian hills.

THE LADY

Your young Italian—yes! I saw you stand
And point his path across our well-walled land:
A sculptor's model, but alas! no god:
These narrow fields the goat-foot never trod!

THE POET

Yet from his eyes the mirth a moment glanced
To which the streams of old Arcadia danced;
And on his tongue still lay the childish lore
Of that lost world for which you hope no more.

THE LADY

Tell me!—from where I watched I saw his face,
And his hands moving with a rustic grace,
Caught too the alien sweetness of his speech,
But sound alone, not sense, my ears could reach.

THE POET

He asked if we in England ever heard
The tiny beasts, half insect and half bird,
That neither eat nor sleep, but die content
When they in endless song their strength have spent.

THE LADY

Cicalas! how the name enchants me back
To the grey olives and the dust-white track!
Was there a story then?—I have forgot,
Or else by chance my Umbrians told it not.

THE POET

Lover of music, you at least should know
That these were men in ages long ago,—
Ere music was,—and then the Muses came,
And love of song took hold on them like flame.

THE LADY

Yes, I remember now the voice that speaks—
Most living still of all the deathless Greeks—
Yet tell me—how they died divinely mad,
And of the Muses what reward they had.

THE POET

They are reborn on earth, and from the first
They know not sleep, they hunger not nor thirst:
Summer with glad Cicala's song they fill,
Then die, and go to haunt the Muses' Hill.

THE LADY

They are reborn indeed! and rightly you
The far-heard echo of their music knew!
Pray now to Pan, since you too, it would seem,
Were there with Phædrus, by Ilissus' stream.

THE POET

Belovèd Pan, and all ye gods whose grace
For ever haunts our short life's resting-place,
Outward and inward make me one true whole,
And grant me beauty in the inmost soul!

THE LADY

And thou, O Night, O starry Queen of Air,
Remember not my blind and faithless prayer!
Let me too live, let me too sing again,
Since Beauty wanders still the ways of men.

The Faun

YESTERDAY I thought to roam
Idly through the fields of home,
And I came at morning's end
To our brook's familiar bend.
There I raised my eyes, and there,
Shining through an ampler air,
Folded in by hills of blue
Such as Wessex never knew,
Changed as in a waking dream
Flowed the well-remembered stream.

Now a line of wattled pale
Fenced the downland from the vale,
Now the sedge was set with reeds
Fitter for Arcadian meads,
And where I was wont to find
Only things of timid kind,
Now the Genius of the pool
Mocked me from his corner cool.
Eyes he had with malice quick,
Tufted hair and ears a-prick,
And, above a tiny chin,
Lips with laughter wide a-grin.

Therewithal a shaggy flank
In the crystal clear he sank,
And beneath the unruffled tide
A little pair of hooves I spied.

Yet though plainly there he stood,
Creature of the wave and wood,
Under his satyric grace
Something manlike I could trace,
And the eyes that mocked me there
Like a gleam of memory were.

" So," said I at last to him,
Frowning from the river's brim,
" This is where you come to play
Heedless of the time of day."

" Nay," replied the youthful god,
Leaning on the flowery sod,
" Here there are no clocks, and so
Time can neither come nor go."

" Little goat," said I, " you're late,
And your dinner will not wait :
If to-day you wish to eat,
Trust me, you must find your feet."

" Father," said the little goat,
" Do you know that I can float ?

Do you know that I can dive
As deep as any duck alive ?
Would you like to see me drop
Out of yonder willow's top ? "

Sternly I replied again,
" You may spare your boasting vain :
All that you can do I did
When I was myself a kid."
Laughter followed such as pealed
Through the first unfurrowed field.
" Then what mother says is true,
And your hoof is cloven too ! "

Ah !—but that irreverent mirth,
Learnt of the primeval earth,
Surely was with magic fraught
That upon my pulses wrought :
I too felt the air of June
Humming with a merry tune,
I too reckoned, like a boy,
Less of Time and more of Joy :
Till, as homeward I was wending,
I perceived my back unbending,
And before the mile was done
Ran beside my truant son.

Fidele's Grassy Tomb

THE Squire sat propped in a pillowed chair,
His eyes were alive and clear of care,
But well he knew that the hour was come
To bid good-bye to his ancient home.

He looked on garden, wood, and hill,
He looked on the lake, sunny and still:
The last of earth that his eyes could see
Was the island church of Orchardleigh.

The last that his heart could understand
Was the touch of the tongue that licked his hand:
"Bury the dog at my feet," he said,
And his voice dropped, and the Squire was dead.

Now the dog was a hound of the Danish breed,
Staunch to love and strong at need:
He had dragged his master safe to shore
When the tide was ebbing at Elsinore.

From that day forth, as reason would,
He was named "Fidele," and made it good:
When the last of the mourners left the door
Fidele was dead on the chantry floor.

They buried him there at his master's feet,
And all that heard of it deemed it meet:
The story went the round for years,
Till it came at last to the Bishop's ears.

Bishop of Bath and Wells was he,
Lord of the lords of Orchardleigh;
And he wrote to the Parson the strongest screed
That Bishop may write or Parson read.

The sum of it was that a soulless hound
Was known to be buried in hallowed ground:
From scandal sore the Church to save
They must take the dog from his master's grave.

The heir was far in a foreign land,
The Parson was wax to my Lord's command:
He sent for the Sexton and bade him make
A lonely grave by the shore of the lake.

The Sexton sat by the water's brink
Where he used to sit when he used to think:
He reasoned slow, but he reasoned it out,
And his argument left him free from doubt.

"A Bishop," he said, "is the top of his trade;
But there's others can give him a start with the spade:
Yon dog, he carried the Squire ashore,
And a Christian couldn't ha' done no more."

The grave was dug; the mason came
And carved on stone Fidele's name;
But the dog that the Sexton laid inside
Was a dog that never had lived or died.

So the Parson was praised, and the scandal stayed,
Till, a long time after, the church decayed,
And, laying the floor anew, they found
In the tomb of the Squire the bones of a hound.

As for the Bishop of Bath and Wells
No more of him the story tells;
Doubtless he lived as a Prelate and Prince,
And died and was buried a century since.

And whether his view was right or wrong
Has little to do with this my song;
Something we owe him, you must allow;
And perhaps he has changed his mind by now.

The Squire in the family chantry sleeps,
The marble still his memory keeps:
Remember, when the name you spell,
There rest Fidele's bones as well.

For the Sexton's grave you need not search,
'Tis a nameless mound by the island church:
An ignorant fellow, of humble lot—
But he knew one thing that a Bishop did not.

Moonset

PAST seven o'clock: time to be gone;
Twelfth-night's over and dawn shivering up:
A hasty cut of the loaf, a steaming cup,
Down to the door, and there is Coachman John.

Ruddy of cheek is John and bright of eye;
But John it appears has none of your grins and winks;
Civil enough, but short: perhaps he thinks:
Words come once in a mile, and always dry.

Has he a mind or not? I wonder; but soon
We turn through a leafless wood, and there to the right,
Like a sun bewitched in alien realms of night,
Mellow and yellow and rounded hangs the moon.

Strangely near she seems, and terribly great:
The world is dead: why are we travelling still?
Nightmare silence grips my struggling will;
We are driving for ever and ever to find a gate.

"When you come to consider the moon," says John at
last,
And stops, to feel his footing and take his stand;
"And then there's some will say there's never a hand
That made the world!"
A flick, and the gates are passed.

Out of the dim magical moonlit park,
Out to the workday road and wider skies:
There's a warm flush in the East where day's to rise,
And I'm feeling the better for Coachman John's remark.

A Song of Exmoor

THE Forest above and the Combe below,
On a bright September morn!
He's the soul of a clod who thanks not God
That ever his body was born!
So hurry along, the stag's afoot,
The Master's up and away!
Halloo! Halloo! we'll follow it through
From Bratton to Porlock Bay!

So hurry along, the stag's afoot,
The Master's up and away!
Halloo! Halloo! we'll follow it through
From Bratton to Porlock Bay!

Hark to the tufters' challenge true,
'Tis a note that the red-deer knows!
His courage awakes, his covert he breaks,
And up for the moor he goes!
He's all his rights and seven on top,
His eye's the eye of a king,
And he'll beggar the pride of some that ride
Before he leaves the ling!

Here comes Antony bringing the pack,
Steady ! he's laying them on !
By the sound of their chime you may tell that it's time
To harden your heart and be gone.
Nightacott, Narracott, Hunnacott's passed,
Right for the North they race :
He's leading them straight for Blackmoor Gate,
And he's setting a pounding pace !

We're running him now on a breast-high scent,
But he leaves us standing still ;
When we swing round by Westland Pound
He's far up Challacombe Hill.
The pack are a string of struggling ants,
The quarry's a dancing midge,
They're trying their reins on the edge of the Chains
While he's on Cheriton Ridge.

He's gone by Kittuck and Lucott Moor,
He's gone by Woodcock's Ley ;
By the little white town he's turned him down,
And he's soiling in open sea.
So hurry along, we'll both be in,
The crowd are a parish away !
We're a field of two, and we've followed it through
From Bratton to Porlock Bay !

So hurry along, we'll both be in,
The crowd are a parish away !
We're a field of two, and we've followed it through
From Bratton to Porlock Bay !

Master and Man

DO ye ken hoo to fush for the salmon ?
If ye'll listen I'll tell ye.
Dinna trust to the books and their gammon,
They're but trying to sell ye.
Leave professors to read their ain cackle
And fush their ain style ;
Come awa', sir, we'll oot wi' oor tackle
And be busy the while.

'Tis a wee bit ower bright, ye were thinkin' ?
Aw, ye'll no be the loser ;
'Tis better ten baskin' and blinkin'
Than ane that's a cruiser.
If ye're bent, as I tak it, on slatter,
Ye should pray for the droot,
For the salmon's her ain when there's watter,
But she's oors when it's oot.

Ye may just put your flee-book behind ye,
Ane hook wull be plenty ;
If they'll no come for this, my man, mind ye,
They'll no come for twenty.

Ay, a rod ; but the shorter the stranger
And the nearer to strike ;
For myself I prefare it nae langer
Than a yard or the like.

Noo, ye'll stand awa' back while I'm creepin'
Wi' my snoot i' the gowans ;
There's a bonny twalve-poonder a-sleepin'
I' the shade o' yon rowans.
Man, man ! I was fearin' I'd stirred her,
But I've got her the noo !
Hoot ! fushin's as easy as murrder
When ye ken what to do.

Na, na, sir, I doot na ye're willin'
But I canna permit ye ;
For I'm thinkin' that yon kind o' killin'
Wad hardly befit ye.
And some work is deefficult hushin',
There'd be havers and chaff :
'Twull be best, sir, for you to be fushin'
And me wi' the gaff.

Gavotte

(Old French)

MEMORIES long in music sleeping,
No more sleeping,
No more dumb :
Delicate phantoms softly creeping
Softly back from the old-world come.

Faintest odours around them straying,
Suddenly straying
In chambers dim ;
Whispering silks in order swaying,
Glimmering gems on shoulders slim :

Courage advancing strong and tender,
Grace untender
Fanning desire ;
Suppliant conquest, proud surrender,
Courtesy cold of hearts on fire—

Willowy billowy now they're bending,
Low they're bending
Down-dropt eyes ;
Stately measure and stately ending,
Music sobbing, and a dream that dies.

Imogen

(A Lady of Tender Age)

LADIES, where were your bright eyes glancing,
  Where were they glancing yesternight ?
Saw ye Imogen dancing, dancing,
  Imogen dancing all in white ?
  Laughed she not with a pure delight,
  Laughed she not with a joy serene,
Stepped she not with a grace entrancing,
  Slenderly girt in silken sheen ?

All through the night from dusk to daytime
  Under her feet the hours were swift,
Under her feet the hours of playtime
  Rose and fell with a rhythmic lift :
  Music set her adrift, adrift,
  Music eddying towards the day
Swept her along as brooks in Maytime
  Carry the freshly falling May.

Ladies, life is a changing measure,
  Youth is a lilt that endeth soon ;

Pluck ye never so fast at pleasure,
Twilight follows the longest noon.
Nay, but here is a lasting boon,
Life for hearts that are old and chill,
Youth undying for hearts that treasure
Imogen dancing, dancing still.

Nel Mezzo Del Cammìn

WHISPER it not that late in years
Sorrow shall fade and the world be brighter,
Life be freed of tremor and tears,
Heads be wiser and hearts be lighter.
Ah ! but the dream that all endears,
The dream we sell for your pottage of truth—
Give us again the passion of youth,
Sorrow shall fade and the world be brighter.

The Invasion

SPRING, they say, with his greenery
Northward marches at last,
Mustering thorn and elm ;
Breezes rumour him conquering,
Tell how Victory sits
High on his glancing helm.

Smit with sting of his archery,
Hardest ashes and oaks
Burn at the root below :
Primrose, violet, daffodil,
Start like blood where the shafts
Light from his golden bow.

Here where winter oppresses us
Still we listen and doubt,
Dreading a hope betrayed :
Sore we long to be greeting him,
Still we linger and doubt
" What if his march be stayed ? "

Folk in thrall to the enemy,
Vanquished, tilling a soil
Hateful and hostile grown;
Always wearily, warily,
Feeding deep in the heart
Passion they dare not own—

So we wait the deliverer;
Surely soon shall he come,
Soon shall his hour be due:
Spring shall come with his greenery,
Life be lovely again,
Earth be the home we knew.

Rilloby-Rill

GRASSHOPPERS four a-fiddling went,
Heigh-ho ! never be still !
They earned but little towards their rent,
But all day long with their elbows bent
They fiddled a tune called Rilloby-rilloby,
Fiddled a tune called Rilloby-rill.

Grasshoppers soon on Fairies came,
Heigh-ho ! never be still !
Fairies asked with a manner of blame,
" Where do you come from, what is your name ?
What do you want with your Rilloby-rilloby,
What do you want with your Rilloby-rill ? "

" Madam, you see before you stand,
Heigh-ho ! never be still !
The Old Original Favourite Grand
Grasshopper's Green Herbarian Band,
And the tune we play is Rilloby-rilloby,
Madam, the tune is Rilloby-rill."

Fairies hadn't a word to say,
Heigh-ho ! never be still !
Fairies seldom are sweet by day,
But the Grasshoppers merrily fiddled away,
O but they played with a willoby-rilloby,
O but they played with a willoby-will !

Fairies slumber and sulk at noon,
Heigh-ho ! never be still !
But at last the kind old motherly moon
Brought them dew in a silver spoon,
And they turned to ask for Rilloby-rilloby,
One more round of Rilloby-rill.

Ah ! but nobody now replied,
Heigh-ho ! never be still !
When day went down the music died,
Grasshoppers four lay side by side,
And there was an end of their Rilloby-rilloby,
There was an end of their Rilloby-rill.

Pereunt Et Imputantur

(After Martial)

BERNARD, if to you and me
Fortune all at once should give
Years to spend secure and free,
With the choice of how to live,
Tell me, what should we proclaim
Life deserving of the name?

Winning some one else's case?
Saving some one else's seat?
Hearing with a solemn face
People of importance bleat?
No, I think we should not still
Waste our time at others' will.

Summer noons beneath the limes,
Summer rides at evening cool,
Winter's tales and home-made rhymes,
Figures on the frozen pool—
These would we for labours take,
And of these our business make.

Ah ! but neither you nor I
  Dare in earnest venture so ;
Still we let the good days die
  And to swell the reckoning go.
What are those that know the way,
Yet to walk therein delay ?

Felix Antonius

(After Martial)

TO-DAY, my friend is seventy-five;
He tells his tale with no regret;
His brave old eyes are steadfast yet,
His heart the lightest heart alive.

He sees behind him green and wide
The pathway of his pilgrim years;
He sees the shore, and dreadless hears
The whisper of the creeping tide.

For out of all his days, not one
Has passed and left its unlaid ghost
To seek a light for ever lost,
Or wail a deed for ever done.

So for reward of life-long truth
He lives again, as good men can,
Redoubling his allotted span
With memories of a stainless youth.

Ireland, Ireland

DOWN thy valleys, Ireland, Ireland,
Down thy valleys green and sad,
Still thy spirit wanders wailing,
Wanders wailing, wanders mad.

Long ago that anguish took thee,
Ireland, Ireland, green and fair,
Spoilers strong in darkness took thee,
Broke thy heart and left thee there.

Down thy valleys, Ireland, Ireland,
Still thy spirit wanders mad ;
All too late they love that wronged thee,
Ireland, Ireland, green and sad.

Hymn

In the Time of War and Tumults

O LORD Almighty, Thou whose hands
  Despair and victory give;
In whom, though tyrants tread their lands,
  The souls of nations live;

Thou wilt not turn Thy face away
  From those who work Thy will,
But send Thy peace on hearts that pray,
  And guard Thy people still.

Remember not the days of shame,
  The hands with rapine dyed,
The wavering will, the baser aim,
  The brute material pride:

Remember, Lord, the years of faith,
  The spirits humbly brave,
The strength that died defying death,
  The love that loved the slave:

The race that strove to rule Thine earth
With equal laws unbought:
Who bore for Truth the pangs of birth,
And brake the bonds of Thought.

Remember how, since time began,
Thy dark eternal mind
Through lives of men that fear not man
Is light for all mankind.

Thou wilt not turn Thy face away
From those who work Thy will,
But send Thy strength on hearts that pray
For strength to serve Thee still.

The Building of the Temple

(An Anthem heard in Canterbury Cathedral)

The Organ.

O LORD our God, we are strangers before Thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.

O Lord God of our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of Thy people, and prepare their heart unto Thee.

And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart to keep Thy commandments, and to build the palace for the which I have made provision.

Boys' voices.

O come to the Palace of Life,
Let us build it again.
It was founded on terror and strife,
It was laid in the curse of the womb,
And pillared on toil and pain,
And hung with veils of doom,
And vaulted with the darkness of the tomb.

Men's voices.

O Lord our God, we are sojourners here for a day,
Strangers and sojourners, as all our fathers were:
Our years on the earth are a shadow that fadeth away;
Grant us light for our labour, and a time for prayer.

Boys.

But now with endless song,
And joy fulfilling the Law;
Of passion as pure as strong
And pleasure undimmed of awe;
With garners of wine and grain
Laid up for the ages long,
Let us build the Palace again
And enter with endless song,
Enter and dwell secure, forgetting the years of wrong.

Men.

O Lord our God, we are strangers and sojourners here,
Our beginning was night, and our end is hid in Thee:
Our labour on the earth is hope redeeming fear,
In sorrow we build for the days we shall not see.

Boys.

Great is the name
Of the strong and skilled,
Lasting the fame
Of them that build;

The tongues of many nations
Shall speak of our praise,
And far generations
Be glad for our days.

Men.

We are sojourners here as all our fathers were,
As all our children shall be, forgetting and forgot:
The fame of man is a murmur that passeth on the air,
We perish indeed if Thou remember not.

We are sojourners here as all our fathers were,
Strangers travelling down to the land of death:
There is neither work nor device nor knowledge there,
O grant us might for our labour, and to rest in faith.

Boys.

In joy, in the joy of the light to be,

Men.

O Father of Lights, unvarying and true,

Boys.

Let us build the Palace of Life anew.

Men.

Let us build for the years we shall not see.

Boys.

Lofty of line and glorious of hue,
With gold and pearl and with the cedar tree,

Men.

With silence due
And with service free,

Boys.

Let us build it for ever in splendour new.

Men.

Let us build in hope and in sorrow, and rest in Thee.

Epistle

To Colonel Francis Edward Younghusband

ACROSS the Western World, the Arabian Sea,
The Hundred Kingdoms and the Rivers Three,
Beyond the rampart of Himálayan snows,
And up the road that only Rumour knows,
Unchecked, old friend, from Devon to Thibet,
Friendship and Memory dog your footsteps yet.

Let not the scornful ask me what avails
So small a pack to follow mighty trails:
Long since I saw what difference must be
Between a stream like you, a ditch like me.
This drains a garden and a homely field
Which scarce at times a living current yield;
The other from the high lands of his birth
Plunges through rocks and spurns the pastoral earth,
Then settling silent to his deeper course
Draws in his fellows to augment his force,
Becomes a name, and broadening as he goes,
Gives power and purity where'er he flows,
Till, great enough for any commerce grown,
He links all nations while he serves his own.

Soldier, explorer, statesman, what in truth
Have you in common with homekeeping youth?
"Youth" comes your answer like an echo faint;
And youth it was that made us first acquaint.
Do you remember when the Downs were white
With the March dust from highways glaring bright,
How you and I, like yachts that toss the foam,
From Penpole Fields came stride and stride for home?
One grimly leading, one intent to pass,
Mile after mile we measured road and grass,
Twin silent shadows, till the hour was done,
The shadows parted and the stouter won.
Since then I know one thing beyond appeal—
How runs from stem to stern a trimbuilt keel.
Another day—but that's not mine to tell,
The man in front does not observe so well;
Though, spite of all these five-and-twenty years,
As clear as life our schoolday scene appears.
The guarded course, the barriers and the rope;
The runners, stripped of all but shivering hope;
The starter's good grey head; the sudden hush;
The stern white line; the half-unconscious rush;
The deadly bend, the pivot of our fate;
The rope again; the long green level straight;
The lane of heads, the cheering half unheard;
The dying spurt, the tape, the judge's word.

You, too, I doubt not, from your Lama's hall
Can see the Stand above the worn old wall,

Where then they clamoured as our race we sped,
Where now they number our heroic dead.[1]
As clear as life you, too, can hear the sound
Of voices once for all by "lock-up" bound,
And see the flash of eyes still nobly bright
But in the "Bigside scrimmage" lost to sight.

Old loves, old rivalries, old happy times,
These well may move your memory and my rhymes;
These are the Past; but there is that, my friend,
Between us two, that has nor time nor end.
Though wide apart the lines our fate has traced
Since those far shadows of our boyhood raced,
In the dim region all men must explore—
The mind's Thibet, where none has gone before—
Rounding some shoulder of the lonely trail
We met once more, and raised a lusty hail.

"Forward!" cried one, "for us no beaten track,
No city continuing, no turning back:
The past we love not for its being past,
But for its hope and ardour forward cast:
The victories of our youth we count for gain
Only because they steeled our hearts to pain,
And hold no longer even Clifton great
Save as she schooled our wills to serve the State.

[1] In the school quadrangle at Clifton, the site from which, upon occasion, the grand stand used to overlook the Close, is now occupied by the Memorial to those Cliftonians who fell in the South African War.

Nay, England's self, whose thousand-year-old name
Burns in our blood like ever-smouldering flame,
Whose Titan shoulders as the world are wide
And her great pulses like the Ocean tide,
Lives but to bear the hopes we shall not see—
Dear mortal Mother of the race to be."

Thereto you answered, " Forward ! in God's name :
I own no lesser law, no narrower claim.
A freeman's Reason well might think it scorn
To toil for those who may be never born,
But for some Cause not wholly out of ken,
Some all-directing Will that works with men,
Some Universal under which may fall
The minor premiss of our effort small ;
In Whose unending purpose, though we cease,
We find our impulse and our only peace."

So passed our greeting, till we turned once more,
I to my desk and you to rule Indore.
To meet again—ah ! when ? Yet once we met,
And to one dawn our faces still are set.

EXETER,
September 10, 1904.

An Essay on Criticism

'TIS hard to say if greater waste of time
Is seen in writing or in reading rhyme;
But, of the two, less dangerous it appears
To tire our own than poison others' ears.
Time was, the owner of a peevish tongue,
The pebble of his wrath unheeding flung,
Saw the faint ripples touch the shore and cease,
And in the duckpond all again was peace.
But since that Science on our eyes hath laid
The wondrous clay from her own spittle made,
We see the widening ripples pass beyond,
The pond becomes the world, the world a pond,
All ether trembles when the pebble falls,
And a light word may ring in starry halls.
When first on earth the swift iambic ran
Men here and there were found but nowhere Man.
From whencesoe'er their origin they drew,
Each on its separate soil the species grew,
And by selection, natural or not,
Evolved a fond belief in one small spot.
The Greek himself, with all his wisdom, took
For the wide world his bright Ægean nook,

For fatherland, a town, for public, all
Who at one time could hear the herald bawl :
For him barbarians beyond his gate
Were lower beings, of a different date ;
He never thought on such to spend his rhymes,
And if he did, they never read the *Times*.
Now all is changed, on this side and on that,
The Herald's learned to print and pass the hat ;
His tone is so much raised that, far or near,
All with a sou to spend his news may hear,—
And who but, far or near, the sou affords
To learn the worst of foreigners and lords !
So comes the Pressman's heaven on earth, wherein
One touch of hatred proves the whole world kin—
" Our rulers are the best, and theirs the worst,
Our cause is always just and theirs accurst,
Our troops are heroes, hirelings theirs or slaves,
Our diplomats but children, theirs but knaves,
Our Press for independence justly prized,
Theirs bought or blind, inspired or subsidized.
For the world's progress what was ever made
Like to our tongue, our Empire and our trade ? "
So chant the nations, till at last you'd think
Men could no nearer howl to folly's brink ;
Yet some in England lately won renown
By howling word for word, but upside down.

But where, you cry, could poets find a place
(If poets we possessed) in this disgrace ?

Mails will be Mails, Reviews must be reviews,
But why the Critic with the Bard confuse ?
Alas ! Apollo, it must be confessed
Has lately gone the way of all the rest.
No more alone upon the far-off hills
With song serene the wilderness he fills,
But in the forum now his art employs
And what he lacks in knowledge gives in noise.
At first, ere he began to feel his feet,
He begged a corner in the hindmost sheet,
Concealed with Answers and Acrostics lay,
And held aloof from Questions of the Day.
But now, grown bold, he dashes to the front,
Among the leaders bears the battle's brunt,
Takes steel in hand, and cheaply unafraid
Spurs a lame Pegasus on Jameson's Raid,
Or pipes the fleet in melodrama's tones
To ram the Damned on their Infernal Thrones.

Sure, Scriblerus himself could scarce have guessed
The Art of Sinking might be further pressed :
But while these errors almost tragic loom
The Indian Drummer has but raised a boom.
" So well I love my country that the man
Who serves her can but serve her on my plan ;
Be slim, be stalky, leave your Public Schools
To muffs like Bobs and other flannelled fools :
The lordliest life (since Buller made such hay)
Is killing men two thousand yards away ;

You shoot the pheasant, but it costs too much
And does not tend to decimate the Dutch ;
Your duty plainly then before you stands,
Conscription is the law for seagirt lands ;
Prate not of freedom ! Since I learned to shoot
I itch to use my ammunition boot."

An odd way this, we thought, to criticize—
This barrackyard " Attention ! d—— your eyes ! "
But England smiled and lightly pardoned him,
For was he not her Mowgli and her Kim ?
But now the neighbourhood remonstrance roars,
He's naughty still, and naughty out of doors.
'Tis well enough that he should tell Mamma
Her sons are tired of being what they are,
But to give friendly bears, expecting buns,
A paper full of stale unwholesome Huns—
One might be led to think, from all this work,
That little master's growing quite a Turk.

O Rudyard, Rudyard, in our hours of ease
(Before the war) you were not hard to please :
You loved a regiment whether fore or aft,
You loved a subaltern, however daft,
You loved the very dregs of barrack life,
The amorous colonel and the sergeant's wife.
You sang the land where dawn across the Bay
Comes up to waken queens in Mandalay,
The land where comrades sleep by Cabul ford,
And Valour, brown or white, is Borderlord,

The secret Jungle-life of child and beast,
And all the magic of the dreaming East.
These, these we loved with you, and loved still more
The Seven Seas that break on Britain's shore,
The winds that know her labour and her pride,
And the Long Trail whereon our fathers died.

In that Day's Work be sure you gained, my friend,
If not the critic's name, at least his end ;
Your song and story might have roused a slave
To see life bodily and see it brave.
With voice so genial and so long of reach
To your Own People you the Law could preach,
And even now and then without offence
To Lesser Breeds expose their lack of sense.
Return, return ! and let us hear again
The ringing engines and the deep-sea rain,
The roaring chanty of the shore-wind's verse,
Too bluff to bicker and too strong to curse.
Let us again with hearts serene behold
The coastwise beacons that we knew of old ;
So shall you guide us when the stars are veiled,
And stand among the Lights that never Failed.

Le Byron de Nos Jours; or, The English Bar and Cross Reviewers

STILL must I hear ?—while Austin prints his verse
And Satan's sorrows fill Corelli's purse,
Must I not write lest haply some K.C.
To flatter Tennyson should sneer at me ?
Or must the Angels of the Darker Ink
No longer tell the public what to think—
Must lectures and reviewing all be stayed
Until they're licensed by the Board of Trade ?
Prepare for rhyme—I'll risk it—bite or bark
I'll stop the press for neither Gosse nor Clarke.

O sport most noble, when two cocks engage
With equal blindness and with equal rage !
When each, intent to pick the other's eye,
Sees not the feathers from himself that fly,
And, fired to scorch his rival's every bone,
Ignores the inward heat that grills his own ;
Until self-plucked, self-spitted and self-roast,
Each to the other serves himself on toast.

But stay, but stay, you've pitched the key, my Muse,
A semi-tone too low for great Reviews ;

Such penny whistling suits the cockpit's hum,
But here's a scene deserves the biggest drum.

Behold where high above the clamorous town
The vast Cathedral-towers in peace look down :
Hark to the entering crowd's incessant tread—
They bring their homage to the mighty dead.
Who in silk gown and fullest-bottomed wig
Approaches yonder, with emotion big ?
Room for Sir Edward ! now we shall be told
Which shrines are tin, which silver and which gold.
'Tis done ! and now by life-long habit bound
He turns to prosecute the crowd around ;
Indicts and pleads, sums up the *pro* and *con*,
The verdict finds and puts the black cap on.

" Prisoners, attend ! of Queen Victoria's day
I am the Glory, you are the Decay.
You cannot think like Tennyson deceased,
You do not sing like Browning in the least.
Of Tennyson I sanction every word,
Browning I cut to something like one-third :
Though, mind you this, immoral he is not,
Still quite two-thirds I hope will be forgot.
He was to poetry a Tom Carlyle—
And that reminds me, Thomas too was vile.
He wrote a life or two, but parts, I'm sure,
Compared with other parts are very poor.

Now Dickens—most extraordinary—dealt
In fiction with what people really felt.
That proves his genius. Thackeray again
Is so unequal as to cause me pain.
And last of all, with History to conclude,
I've read Macaulay and I've heard of Froude.
That list, with all deductions, Gentlemen,
Will show that 'now' is not the same as 'then':
If you believe the plaintiff you'll declare
That English writers are not what they were."

Down sits Sir Edward with a glowing breast,
And some applause is instantly suppressed.
Now up the nave of that majestic church
A quick uncertain step is heard to lurch.
Who is it? no one knows; but by his mien
He's the head verger, if he's not the Dean.

"What fellow's this that dares to treat us so?
This is no place for lawyers, out you go!
He is a brawler, Sir, who here presumes
To move our laurels and arrange our tombs.
Suppose that Meredith or Stephen said
(Or do you think those gentlemen are dead?)
This age has borne no advocates of rank,
Would not your face in turn be rather blank?
Come now, I beg you, go without a fuss,
And leave these high and heavenly things to us;
You may perhaps be some one, at the Bar,
But you are not in Orders, and we are."

Sir Edward turns to go, but as he wends,
One swift irrelevant retort he sends.
"Your logic and your taste I both disdain,
You've quoted wrong from Jonson and Montaigne."
The shaft goes home, and somewhere in the rear
Birrell in smallest print is heard to cheer.

And yet—and yet—conviction's not complete:
There was a time when Milton walked the street,
And Shakespeare singing in a tavern dark
Would not have much impressed Sir Edward Clarke.
To be alive—ay! there's the damning thing,
For who will buy a bird that's on the wing?
Catch, kill and stuff the creature, once for all,
And he may yet adorn Sir Edward's hall;
But while he's free to go his own wild way
He's not so safe as birds of yesterday.

In fine, if I must choose—although I see
That both are wrong—Great Gosse! I'd rather be
A critic suckled in an age outworn
Than a blind horse that starves knee-deep in corn.

NOTE.—The foregoing parody, which first appeared in *The Monthly Review* some years ago, was an attempt to sum up and commemorate a literary discussion of the day. On Saturday night, November 15, 1902, at the Working Men's College, Great Ormond Street, Sir Edward Clarke, K.C., delivered an address on "The Glory and Decay of English Literature in the Reign of Victoria." "Sir Edward Clarke, who mentioned incidentally that he lectured at the college forty years ago, said that there was a rise from the beginning of that reign to the period

1850–60, and that from the latter date there had been a very strange and lamentable decline to the end of the reign, would, he thought, be amply demonstrated. A glorious galaxy of talent adorned the years 1850–60. There were two great poets, two great novelists, and two great historians. The two great poets were Alfred Tennyson and Robert Browning. The first named would always stand at the head of the literature of the Victorian period. There was no poet in the whole course of our history whose works were more likely to live as a complete whole than he, and there was not a line which his friends would wish to see blotted out. Robert Browning was a poet of strange inequality and of extraordinary and fantastic methods in his composition. However much one could enjoy some of his works, one could only hope that two-thirds of them would be as promptly as possible forgotten—not, however, from any moral objection to what he wrote. He was the Carlyle of poetry. By his Lives of Schiller and Sterling, Carlyle showed that he *could* write beautiful and pure English, but that he should descend to the style of some of his later works was a melancholy example of misdirected energy. . . . Charles Dickens was perhaps the most extraordinary genius of those who had endeavoured to deal with fiction as illustrative of the actual experiences of life. With Dickens there stood the great figure of Thackeray, who had left a great collection of books, very unequal in their quality, but containing amongst them some of the finest things ever written in the English tongue. The two great historians were Macaulay and Froude. To-day we had no great novelists. Would anyone suggest we had a poet? (Laughter.) After the year 1860 there were two great names in poetry—the two Rossettis. There had been no book produced in the last ten years which could compete with any one of the books produced from 1850 to 1860."

To this Mr. Edmund Gosse replied a week later at the Dinner of the Encyclopædia Britannica. He reminded his audience that even the most perspicuous people in past times had made the grossest blunders when they judged their own age. Let them remember the insensibility of Montaigne to the merits of all his contemporaries. In the next age, and in their own country, Ben Jonson took occasion at the very moment when Shakespeare was producing his masterpieces, to lament the total decay of poetry in England. We could not see the trees for the wood behind them, but we ought to be confident they were growing all the time.

Mr. Gosse also wrote to the *Times* on behalf of "the Profession" of Letters, reminding Sir Edward of the names of Swinburne and William Morris, Hardy and Stevenson, Creighton and Gardiner, and asking what would be the feelings of the learned gentleman if Meredith or Leslie Stephen (of whose existence he was perhaps unaware) should put the question in public, "Would anyone suggest we have an Advocate?"

Sir Edward, in his rejoinder, had no difficulty in showing that Mr.

Gosse's citation of Montaigne and Jonson was not verbally exact. Mr. Birrell added some comments which were distinguished by being printed in type of a markedly different size.

To the author of these lines, the controversy appears so typical and so likely to arise again, that he desires to record, in however slight a form, his recollection of it, and his own personal bias, which is in no degree lessened by reconsideration after ten years.

NOTES

Drake's Drum.—A State drum, painted with the arms of Sir Francis Drake, is preserved among other relics at Buckland Abbey, the seat of the Drake family in Devon.

The Fighting Téméraire.—The last two stanzas have been misunderstood. It seems, therefore, necessary to state that they are intended to refer to Turner's picture in the National Gallery of "The Fighting *Téméraire* tugged to her Last Berth."

San Stefano.—Sir Peter Parker was the son of Admiral Christopher Parker, grandson of Admiral Sir Peter Parker (the life-long friend and chief mourner of Nelson), and great-grandson of Admiral Sir William Parker. On his mother's side he was grandson of Admiral Byron, and first cousin of Lord Byron, the poet. He was killed in action near Baltimore in 1814, and buried in St. Margaret's, Westminster, where may be seen the monument erected to his memory by the officers of the *Menelaus*.

The Quarter-Gunner's Yarn.—This ballad is founded on fragmentary lines communicated to the author by Admiral Sir Windham Hornby, K.C.B., who served under Sir Thomas Hardy in 1827. For an account of Cheeks the Marine see Marryat's *Peter Simple*.

Væ Victis.—See *Livy*, xxx., 43; *Diodorus Siculus*, xix., 106.

Seringapatam.—In 1780, while attempting to relieve Arcot, a British force of three thousand men was cut to pieces by Hyder Ali. Baird, then a young captain in the 73rd, was left for dead on the field. He was afterwards, with forty-nine other officers, kept in prison at Seringapatam, and treated with Oriental barbarity and treachery by Hyder Ali and his son Tippoo Sahib, Sultans of Mysore. Twenty-three of the prisoners died by poison, torture, and fever; the rest were surrendered in 1784. In 1799, at the Siege of Seringapatam, Major-General Baird commanded the first European brigade, and volunteered to lead the storming column. Tippoo Sahib, with eight thousand of his men, fell in the assault, but the victor spared the lives of his sons, and forbade a general sack of the city.

Clifton Chapel.—Thirty-five Old Cliftonian officers served in the campaign of 1897 on the Indian Frontier, of whom twenty-two were mentioned in despatches, and six recommended for the Distinguished

Service Order. Of the three hundred Cliftonians who served in the war in South Africa, thirty were killed in action and fourteen died of wounds or fever.

> "Clifton, remember these thy sons who fell
> Fighting far over sea;
> For they in a dark hour remembered well
> Their warfare learned of thee."

More than 3,000 have served in the Great War, of whom over 500 have been killed in four years. Their honours are past count.

> "From the great Marshal to the last recruit
> These, Clifton, were thy self, thy spirit in deed,
> Thy flower of chivalry, thy fallen fruit,
> And thine immortal seed."

The Echo.—The ballad was "The Twa Sisters of Binnorie," as set by Arthur Somervell.

Sráhmandázi.—This ballad is founded on materials given to the author by the late Miss Mary Kingsley on her return from her last visit to the Bantu peoples of West Africa. The songnet, as described by her, resembles a long piece of fishing-net folded, and is carried by the Songman over his shoulder. When opened and laid before an audience, it is seen to contain "tokens"—such as a leopard's paw, a child's hair, a necklet, or a dried fish—sewn firmly to the meshes of the net. These form a kind of symbolical index to the Songman's repertory: the audience make their choice by laying a hand upon any token which appears desirable. The last of the tokens is that which represents the Song of Dying or Song of Sráhmandázi. It is a shapeless piece of any substance, and is recognized only by its position in the net. The song, being unintelligible to the living, is never asked for until the moment of death.

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